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Egon Wellesz—An Austrian Composer in Britain

BY

HANS F. REDLICH

I

THE following study needs, perhaps, a prefatory remark: in order to dispel any lingering hope in the mind of the prospective reader, expecting to receive in these pages a complete and objective assessment of Egon Wellesz' creative achievement. Elsewhere¹ I have tried to give a more comprehensive account of the composer's development, extending from the early years of his apprenticeship under Schönberg (1904) right up to the latest period of his activity in Vienna, when his position as one of the boldest innovators of contemporary opera seemed assured in the acknowledgment of more than forty continental opera houses. My ultimate aim, then, was to classify and "pigeonhole" the prodigious musical output of a man whose responsible position as a leading musicologist at Vienna University and as an expert on problems of Byzantine music alone might have sufficed to quell permanently any creative urge. I strove then for impartiality of judgment and for unbiased detachment. The following pages reflect a very different point of view: they have been written in deep and sincere sympathy with an exiled artist whose spiritual courage and undaunted will to creative self-assertion and renewal in the sense of Goethe's neo-Firdusian Memento:

Und so lang du das nicht hast,
dieses "Stirb" und "Werde",
Bist du nur ein trüber Gast
Auf der dunklen Erde. . ."

should be of paradigmatical value in an epoch of restless transition and lost orientation.

Writing this study in a very personal, almost confessional vein, I find some justification for so doing in the fact of my "selective affinity" to the man and his work: as an Austrian like himself, as a musician—endeavouring to unite historical and creative tendencies—as a "good European" in the spirit of Nietzsche's formula and—last but not least—as a lifelong friend. Any proselytizing tinge the careful reader may detect is quite intentional. This study is devoted to creating a better understanding and a greater sensibility of the trial of the fugitive and exiled artist in our time. His sudden intrusion into foreign cultural spheres may at first cause some irritation even in sympathetic quarters. And yet, he is only the weary latecomer of an illustrious ancestry.

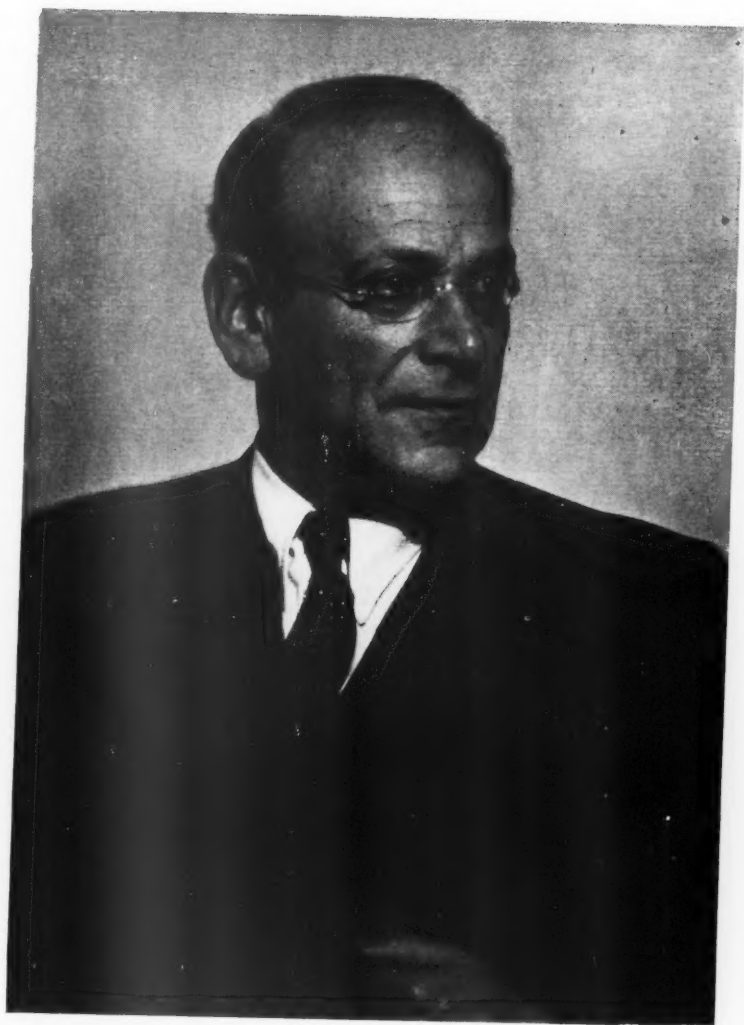
¹ In the study "Egon Wellesz", published in *Musical Quarterly*, New York, January, 1940; containing a complete list of works. Also in the article "E.W." in Grove's Dictionary, Supplementary Vol. published 1940.

Ovidius in the Crimea, Dante in Verona, Richard Wagner in Zurich . . . they have all been political exiles, deprived of their legitimate audience, of their national culture, of the stimulating effect of their mother tongue, in short, of all the elements constituting their natural surroundings. They had to struggle for spiritual survival and to combat a growing feeling of frustration. It is comforting to know to-day in safe retrospect that the creative outcome of their struggle sometimes represented a landmark in the evolution of their art . . . The spectacle of the fugitive Richard Wagner—banished for decades from his homeland, deprived of all means of artistic existence, shattered in his convictions, and yet miraculously filled with the forebodings of a gigantic future—may not be exactly pleasant. But the scene—emerging from one of Wagner's self-revelatory letters—how he hurried from Switzerland to Genoa (in pursuit of the lost and seemingly unattainable Genius of musical creation), how in the dreariness of an Italian hotel room the inspiration for the first bars of *Rheingold* suddenly flashed into his mind, banishing all the theoretical spectres of six unproductive years of political exile, and how he fought his way doggedly back into the very core of his new music, should be a useful reminder to those, for whom Wagner's "parasitical life" in Zurich is only a cause for self-righteous annoyance.

The aspect of the exiled artist Egon Wellesz is certainly much more dignified. And if he has suffered in the purgatory of the past years he has never attempted to turn these sufferings into a matter of high publicity as Wagner was always inclined to do. The new works Wellesz has written, after an interval of almost six years of purely musicological occupation, seem to me of symbolical significance as the token of an act of creative re-birth. Inspired by the genius of the Anglo-Saxon tongue as well as by the spiritual fountain of Austrian musical tradition they seem deeply linked with the country which sheltered their conception. An introduction to their problems should therefore not be unwelcome to any English reader sympathetic to the stirrings of new artistic convictions among the remnants of our swiftly dying past.

II

The new works of Wellesz are separated from their predecessors by a wide gulf of almost six years: and it seems deeply significant that the career of this typically Austrian composer should have come to a temporary end almost simultaneously with the political extinction of his homeland. The last performance of a new work from his pen took place in the very last concert of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra on 20th February, 1938. The programme, conducted superbly by Bruno Walter, included Wellesz' new symphonic Suite *Prosperos Beschwörungen* (*Prospero's Incantation*), Op. 53, a work inspired by the magic aura of Shakespeare's *Tempest*. Nobody knew at that time for certain, but many a witness felt dimly, that this Philharmonic concert (in which another quasi-novelty of yet another great Austrian Catholic and humanist was played: Anton Bruckner's fourth Symphony in its original, unadulterated scoring) might be the last occasion for Austrian music to assert



Faver: London

EGON WELLESZ
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itself for a long time to come. With this programmatic Symphony² (whose ingenious translation of Caliban's "subhuman" character into purely orchestral terms remains indelibly imprinted in the memory) Wellesz, the operatic dramatist, seemed to have risen to new heights. And in the light of this recent achievement the organic evolution of his music seemed so logical: the early chamber music (songs, piano sketches, string quartets) emerging from his early Schönberg period, the later Grecian operas *Alkestis* and *Bacchae* (inspired by Euripides and Hofmannsthal), the colourful ballets on oriental and antique subjects with their brilliant orchestral design and the longer choral works of more recent years (among them two Masses and the noble cantata *Media in vita* on sacred texts for soprano, mixed chorus and large orchestra, Op. 45³).

Three paramount tendencies seemed to me to permeate these works and to carry them safely through the vortex of restlessly shifting musical fashions: first, a sincere craving for a more objective conception of Opera than had prevailed in the era subjected to the full blast of Wagnerian influence and—coupled with this tendency—a growing predilection for hieratic and ritual dramatic subjects on choral and dance elements⁴; secondly, a consequent effort to utilize certain possibilities of Schönberg's twelve-tone technique, without any strict dogmatic adherence to them, for the purpose of increasing the range of tonality without abolishing it⁵; thirdly, an increasingly successful attempt to revise the customary approach to the shaping of the declamatory line in vocal music.⁶ The works in which this tendency towards the creation of a new declamatory style became manifest, seem to me of special importance for possible future developments.

Prospero's Incantation had been played against a political horizon of definitely sinister hue. In the early days of March, 1938 (when Vienna was in a state of alternate hope and despair) Bruno Walter went to Holland to conduct Wellesz' new symphonic suite at the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam;⁷ the composer accompanied him to Holland, never to return home again . . . This journey—undertaken three days before the Nazis crossed the Austrian frontier—may have saved their lives. A few days more and perpetual darkness was to fall over Austria . . . Only a month was to pass before Wellesz found a haven

² The subtitles of the *Suite* are: *Prospero's Incantation*, *Ariel's Tempest*, *Ariel's Song*, *Caliban*, *Ferdinand* and *Miranda*.

³ This work appeared in 1932 with an admirable English translation by H. C. Colles and was presented by the composer to the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University on 10th May, 1932, as a token of gratitude after the University had conferred on him the honorary degree of Mus.D. Oxon. The Cantata has not yet been performed in this country.

⁴ *Alkestis*, 1927; *Bacchantinnen*, 1931; *Opferung des Gefangenen*, 1925; *Achilles auf Skyros* 1923.

⁵ String Quartets Op. 20, 25, 28; the musical comedy *Scherz, List und Rache* (in free adaptation of Goethe's libretto) Op. 41, 1927, and *Five Sonnets* by Elizabeth Barrett-Browning (for Soprano and String Quartet) Op. 52, 1934.

⁶ Noticeable in many parts of the aforesaid operas and in the more declamatory passages of the choral works, but for the first time consciously employed in *Amore timido*, Op. 50, in the *Barrett-Browning Sonnets*, Op. 52, and in the songs on texts by Hofmannsthal, Op. 54/55.

⁷ Amusingly enough *Prospero* replaced in the Amsterdam programme Strauss' *Death and Transfiguration*. The work was repeated a week later in Rotterdam. In both concerts conductor and composer were given an almost frenzied reception by an audience infuriated by the news of the Nazi coup in Austria.

and refuge in the monastic seclusion of an Oxford College. His great qualities as a teacher and as a student of oriental music could be utilized once more—thanks to the generosity and appreciation of the University and its enlightened members (among them the unforgettable friend and helper, H. C. Colles). But the creative mainspring of music seemed to have dried up in Wellesz when I met him again early in 1939 in Oxford. Was there any use in composing operas for non-existent opera houses? The language that had for so long inspired his innermost musical thought seemed worse than dead—polluted in its very elements. Where was the expectant crowd to be found at whose benefit music's "community building power" (as Paul Bekker used to call it) could prove itself?

In this period of creative purgatory Egon Wellesz experienced for the first time the sweeping dynamism and cleansing power emanating from the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins.

III

For me there is a deeply symbolical significance in the fact that it was Hopkins' beautiful poem *The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo* with its tremendous musical potentialities ("I never did anything more musical" the poet himself confessed), that lured Wellesz back to music. It is after all only natural that the arresting personality of the "Poet and Priest", of the Essex lad who was converted to Roman Catholicism while still in his teens only to become later a member of the Societas Jesu, should have appealed to the imagination of the Roman Catholic convert in Wellesz. But there are special elements in the make-up of Hopkins' "Anglo-Saxon" poetry which would strike a note almost of familiarity in the heart of the Austrian musician: Hopkins' music-inspired, non-metrical "sprung rhythm" with its shifting accents (so well known to students of the "free rhythms" in Hölderlin and Rilke), his partiality to emphatic alliteration (known as "Stabreim" to Germans and reintroduced by Wagner into his *Ring* text in consequence of his creative impact with the nordic poetry of "Edda" and "Völuspá") and to the Welsh "Cynganedd" (the equivalent of "Assonanz" in German Romantic poetry). Finally the poetical subject of the "Golden Echo" (which originally represented a Maidens' Chorus from an unfinished mystery-play around the legendary figure of St. Winefred) with its two-fold struggle of the soul between evanescent terrestrial beauty and the eternity of repose in God and with its subtle dramatic implications (the poem seems split up into an imaginary dialogue between the Maidens and the sun-gleam of the "Golden Echo") must have attracted the musical dramatist in Wellesz to a considerable degree.

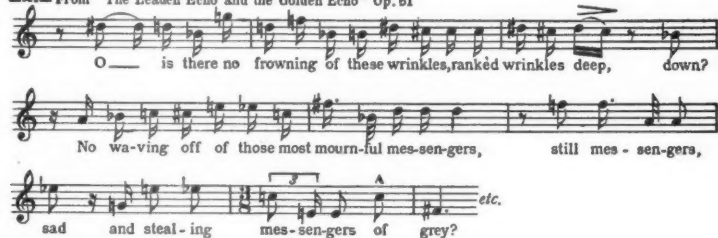
Wellesz composed the poem for an ensemble of players consisting of violin, clarinet in B flat, cello, piano and soprano solo. The music of this recent opus 61 is of a particular limpid beauty and rhythmical freshness, leaving no doubt about the debt owed by the composer to the particular qualities of Hopkins' verse—so fraught with immanent melodic inspiration. The virginal despair of the "Leaden Echo" is musically characterized by an instrumental twelvetone combination which dominates the first half of the score without

ever completely banishing purely tonal resolutions,⁸ especially where the sudden re-emergence of tonality is of emotional significance. A few examples—by necessity fragmentary—may elucidate this point of view:



This twelve-tone row with its various alternatives, inversions and combinations forms the background for the telling curve of vocal declamation, abounding in passages of a noteworthy mixture of parlando, recitativo secco and arioso, like the following:

Ex. 2 From "The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo" Op. 61



The peculiar hypnotic quality of almost childlike repetitiveness in Hopkins' poetry contains not only untapped possibilities for the creation of new methods of declamation (as evident in the foregoing example) but also forms an important basis for a potential musical structure. The punning intricacies of "inner assonances" (in the sense of ancient Welsh poetry)—as for instance in the magical transition from the "Leaden Echo" to the "Golden Echo".

"Be beginning to despair, to despair,
Despair, despair, despair, despair.
The Golden Echo: Spare!

imply, doubtless, an element of key change and musical modulation. This modulatory transition (which the most recent commentator on Hopkins characterizes in the technical terms of Music)⁹ has found its legitimate musical counterpart in the poignant bars of Wellesz' score (Ex. 3).

The Maidens' final renunciation of ephemeral worldly beauty by following the "Golden Echo" into the extramundane spheres of spirituality—so typical of Hopkins, and at the same time evoking in continental minds a faint echo of Goethe's seraphic call:

"Komm, hebe dich in höhere Sphären,
Wenn er dich ahnet, folgt er nach!"

(Faust, II).

⁸ This species of more accidental or deliberately inconsequent twelve-tone technique reminds me more of Alban Berg's style in his *Wozzeck* and *Lyrische Suite* than of Schönberg. However, the instrumental combination of Wellesz', Op. 61, is a clear derivative of Schönberg's *Pierrot lunaire*.

⁹ Vide W. H. Gardner: *G. M. Hopkins*, 1944, p. 150 ff.

Ex. 3 ditto Adagio

Be be - gin - ning to de - spair, to de - spair, de - spair, de -

(Piano)

-spair de - spair *ppp* de - spair (Vln.)

(loco) Spare!

The Golden Echo: (Piano)

sona bassa

etc.

is beautifully characterized in Wellesz' score by the final reappearance of the very passage that signified the message of the "Golden Echo" (*vide* Ex. 3, last bar of the violin, now transposed a semitone higher into C sharp major). This passage appears now melodically blurred in its outlines and shrouded in a polytonal haze, emerging from a "misterioso" figure on the piano. The simplicity, yet magical persuasiveness of these ultimate bars may fittingly conclude these remarks (Ex. 4).

This ecstatic resolution of all the tensions and crosscurrents of an errant soul in the cloudless heaven of C sharp major, together with the peculiar habits of its vocal part, reminds me of another recent composition of similar experimental significance: Michael Tippett's Cantata, *Boyhood's End* for tenor and piano, a setting of a piece of autobiographical prose by W. H. Hudson. Although the starting points of both Wellesz and Tippett are diametrically opposed to each other stylistically, the ultimate result as regards the outlining of a new treatment of the vocal line is curiously similar. Noticeable in both is the striving for greater control by obeying the laws of poetical "sprung rhythm" rather than the superimposed structure of abstractly conceived music. (The eight-bar period and its superimposition on lyrical patterns in Brahms is still occasionally apparent in the early works of Schönberg). Both works seem to me to signify a new—and perhaps more promising—era of symbiosis between words and music.

IV

The beauties of Anglo-Saxon word-music—so uniquely revealed in English poems originating between the middle ages and the early Renaissance—

Ex. 4 ditto

Clarinet in Bb

Voice

Piano

pp misterioso

Adagissimo

(Vin.) pp

(adagio)

Where.— Yon - der

What, high as that!

we fol-low — now we fol-low —

inspired Wellesz to some delightful settings for three-part unaccompanied women's chorus (Op. 62): *Carol* (after a fifteenth century text "I sing of a maiden that is makeles") and *Song* (on words taken from John Fletcher's *The Faithful Shepherdess*). These little by-products of a new creative urge prove again the composer's remarkable aptitude for a homophonic choral style inspired by Palestrina, Lasso and Hassler. They continue the stylistic simplification and almost monastic austerity of his previous choral experiments in this line¹⁰ and they really manage to recover for once something of the singular purity that pervades similar settings by Monteverdi—especially in the latter's recently rediscovered and strikingly beautiful *Cantiunculae Sacrae* for three-part unaccompanied chorus.

Wellesz' creative regeneration has branched in two directions: a new purely *instrumental* work was completed early in 1944, before the Hopkins cantata: the fifth string Quartet, Op. 60. It is only natural that this new

¹⁰ See Wellesz' earlier choral works, Opp. 43, 46, 47, 59; deeply emotional settings of words by the seventeenth century mystic Angelus Silesius and of poems by the contemporary German poets R. A. Schröder and L. Derleth.

Quartet should, in some respect, take up the thread spun by its earlier predecessors, Opp. 14, 20, 25, 28 written between 1912 and 1920. A superficial glance might lead commentators astray: the visual connection with Schönberg's own quartet style¹¹ is all too obvious to represent the whole truth. A theme like the following (from the second movement):



owes at least as much to the quartet style of the late Beethoven as to Schönberg's similar motif designs. This only proves that the quartet problems of Schönberg, Alban Berg, Bartók, Wellesz and others are nothing but legitimate continuations of the classical Viennese tradition and bears out Wellesz in his description of the widely stretched intervals of the seventh, ninth and eleventh as "Wiener Spannungen"—Viennese intervals.

To elucidate this point, a few "Wiener Spannungen" from different epochs are given below:



A theme like the second subject of the first group in Wellesz' new Quartet (first movement)



emerges clearly from the root tensions of Beethoven's last Quartet (Op. 135, first movement)

¹¹ Whose inclusion of the singing voice into the tissue of string parts in his String Quartet, Op. 10 (poem by Stefan George) and in his later *Serenade* (1924) (*Pelrarca*—Sonnet) has doubtless influenced Wellesz and encouraged him to the successful experiment of the *Barrett Browning Sonnet*—setting for Solo Soprano and String Quartet.



and the "energetic" development motif of Wellesz' first movement



belongs surely more to the world of the accessory subject in Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge*, Op. 133, than to similar "jumpy" Schönberg motifs.¹²



In spite of certain stylistic associations with Schönberg's twelvetone style this Quartet adheres to the classical tradition by clearly establishing a tonal centre in its very first bars. The powerful first theme:



seems clearly focussed on G and the third movement—a nostalgic Largo built on the tapering rhythmical pattern of ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ peters out in the serenity of a common chord of G major in which the dissonances of the cello recitative are no more than soft ripples on the surface of a quiet pond:

Ex. 8 End of the 5th String Quartet Op. 60
gma



V

Wellesz' obvious partiality, in this Quartet, to a somewhat telescoped sonata form¹³ prevails even more outspokenly in his most recent work: the Symphony in C, Op. 63.

¹² In a little study "Beethoven als Vorläufer der 12 Ton-Technik", published in March, 1945, in the *Kulturelle Schriftenreihe des Free Austrian Movement* and therefore almost inaccessible to the English reader, I have devoted more space to the discussion of this arresting parallel.

¹³ First movement with widely expanding exposition, free development with new accessory themes and shortened recapitulation; second movement as elliptic scherzo form with contrapuntal intricacies such as inversion, mirror reflection, etc., and third movement combining adagio mood and finale character, using elaborate cadenza passages as structural bridges in a manner reminiscent of the transitional cadenzas in Beethoven's Opp. 131 and 132, viz. in Op. 131 the cadential transition from the fourth to the fifth movement: in Op. 132, the *Piu Allegro* transition from the *Alla Marcia* to the *Finale*.

It is very difficult to speak about a symphonic work—at present only existing as a chrysalis in the form of a very detailed sketch, and I must appeal to the patience of the reader to wait for a closer and more authoritative analysis until after the completion of the full score.¹⁴ The plan and structure appears to me as a striking contribution to the “Viennese spirit of Symphony”, so triumphantly manifest in the proudest musical ancestry conceivable, embracing the illustrious names of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, Bruckner and Mahler¹⁵ and evidently still capable of rejuvenation. The deliberate limitation to three instead of the customary four movements seems amply justified by Beethoven’s gigantic “Piano Symphonies” in three and even two movements (*Appassionata*, *Waldstein* and Op. III). The Adagio as a *last* movement is not so unusual a feature as might appear to the uninitiated. Not only Bruckner’s fragmentary ninth Symphony, but also Tchaikovsky’s popular *Pathétique* and Mahler’s ninth Symphony end with Adagios of great dimensions and undisputable “finality”. Wellesz’ first movement, in powerfully built sonata form, with extensive exposition and a purely fugal development (thereby adhering to similar devices in Beethoven’s late sonatas, Op. 101 (*Finale*) and Op. 106 (first movement)) is based on the two following theme-groups:



There follows a fantastic Scherzo in the traditional pattern with trio, recapitulation and coda. Consecutive mediant triads play a very interesting constructive part. The trio is a clear derivative of the Scherzo and their thematic inter-relations give a good picture of the organic growth prevailing in the whole work (Ex. 10).

An all-pervading quintuplet figure imparts to the Scherzo a character of almost fanatical unity.¹⁶

¹⁴ In the interval between the writing of this article and its publication the score has been completed. The orchestral treatment is of outstanding lucidity and clarity of design.

¹⁵ This “pedigree” may cause some discomfort to certain modern critics who are inclined to push the last two from their legitimate pedestal solely—“*ad majorem Joannis Sibelii gloriam*”. [Ed.]

¹⁶ To me this particular movement reveals strikingly the close affinity between Wellesz as a symphonist and the traditional pattern of the Viennese symphony of Haydn’s type.

Ex. 10 Symphony in C. 2nd movement (Scherzo)

The third and final movement, *Largo*, is a worthy offspring of Anton Bruckner's cathedral-like slow movements (especially of those of the last three symphonies). It begins with this wonderful invocation on the G string of the first violins, answered in the depths of the orchestra by a chorale tune in the trombones:

Ex. 11

Symphony in C. Slow movement. (MS facsimile.)

At this point my introduction to the new works of Egon Wellesz must break off, though I am fully conscious of the inadequacy and the admittedly fragmentary character of its arguments and quotations. The rest is . . . music, not silence. The fitting continuation of these pages can only be live performance, before an audience whose interested sympathy should be enhanced by the fact that the author of these compositions came to these shores as a stranger and exile, but by the strength of his new work and inspired by the genius of the English tongue—has become a living part of this island community and a test case for its innate assimilative power, releasing fresh creative energies even in a foreigner.

Granados and the Nineteenth Century in Spain

BY

ANN LIVERMORE

Ortega y Gasset's remark that "every Spanish artist begins from chaos, as if none before him had ever been" is more resounding than true. As a generalization it can only be strictly applied to the artist of the early part of the nineteenth century, "cut off from the past, out of touch with the present", as its most acute critic, Larra, observed. It was a troubled time for Spain and a luckless one for the individual artist. The success of the French Revolution produced a strange ferment in a nation which had no intermediary class, and the Napoleonic wars unleashed a power of self-realization in the Spanish people which has never since been entirely repressed. In the violent succession of oscillations which vibrated with only lessening degrees as the impact of those profound shocks became more distant the artist found himself buffeted upon from all sides by mutually antagonistic currents, and caught thus between them, was hardly given pause to draw his breath. Goya saw that the link with the last age was broken.

Music had to suffer a peculiar loss. The two figures of those early days who would undoubtedly have shaped the form of musical things to come died at the time when Spain most needed them. One was the composer Arriaga, and the other, Larra, the critic. Both died impeccably, according to the prevailing fashion; Arriaga contracted consumption in Paris and died at the age of twenty, Larra under thirty, shot by his own hand in one of those moods of excessive emotionalism, the cultivation of which he was so quick to detect in the works of his contemporaries. At this distance the pathos of the fate of the composer and the ironic final gesture of the critic unite both to the spirit of their generation. Arriaga has made it clear that he was naturally gifted with an instinct to assist in bridging the gulf. He has left us more than clues to this. Though the first and last movements of his symphony and quartets are classically of Haydn's line, an air of romanticism stirs through some of his slow movements, and one of the quartets contains a trio which in its use of Spanish colour advances even beyond the coming romantic days, divining with a few touches a future nationalism in music.

Larra wrote on the theatre, music, customs and morals. He, too, had an intuitive sense of direction, but in his case this was propelled by an intellectual concentration sufficiently forceful to have led, or driven, the public out of the morass in which he saw it floundering. He lashed the many and urged the few, accusing these of dawdling and dwindling. At the same time he knew how to balance his sense of abstract values—which he jealously guarded—by his understanding of human needs and shortcomings. In a review of a performance of *Capuletti e Montechi*, at the opera, with Grisi (1834), he makes a spirited defence of Bellini's exquisite melody "ligera pero tierna", and warns the pretentiously-minded reader not to measure its worth by the more profound

language of Beethoven, Homer or Raphael; it is better to be happy in one's own way than wise after the fashion of others, is his conclusion, and here he undoubtedly expresses the Spanish outlook on music generally. Speaking of the "poco filosofía" between the music and text of the latter part of the first act, he thinks it preferable to imagine that the words are other than they appear rather than shut one's ears to the music.

"We prefer in this matter to belong to the immense public rather than to the circle which believes it to be a pitiable calamity to permit itself to be carried away. According to christian morality we are to resist the enemy; but in music we desire to succumb to temptation, and certainly a music-lover in the opera-house is no anchorite. . . ."

Of the small middle class, from which most of the new artists were to come, Larra gives revealing descriptions:

"a middle class, which enlightens itself slowly, which begins to have needs and from this moment begins to realize that it has been, and is, in a bad way, and which wishes for reform, because only by changing can it improve itself. It sees the light, it already longs for it, but like a child, cannot calculate the distance away of what it perceives; believing the objects of its desires to be near, because it wishes them to be so, it stretches out a hand to pluck them, but without sufficient knowledge to become master of the light, nor in what consists the phenomemon of light, nor that the light scorches when snatched by force!"

This middle class he sees as struggling upwards from "a multitude indifferent to everything, brutalized and dead . . . because, as it has no necessities, it lacks stimulus. . . ." In a more typical vein of irony he propounds this conundrum; "In this country does nobody read because nobody writes, or does nobody write because nobody reads?" Elsewhere he compares the backwardness of his contemporaries to the provincial old lady who subscribes regularly to the official Gazette. She reads slowly and with great difficulty, but with such sluggish determination to get through everything down to the most trivial advertisement that she falls behind by several years, believing herself to be still living in one shocking reign of anarchy when the nation has already fallen into another! But Larra died, and the romantic movement which elsewhere was a revolt, never, in Spain, became much more than an effervescence—with a few rare exceptions.

Cultured music was synonymous with Italian opera. The inauguration of the Conservatorio Nacional, in 1830, had produced a flood of pompous rhetoric at the time, but in fact it was only the opening of yet another door, and that an official one, to more Italian influence. The royal patron, María Cristina, was a sentimental Neapolitan and her daughter, Queen Isabel, was notoriously more interested in the beaux yeux of tenori robusti than in the beaux arts of her country.

There was an uninspiring lack of greatness in public life. Accusations of "inmoralidades administrativas" were hurled from side to side. Innumerable resolutions were drawn up, but no solutions were ever found—except in blood; liberal constitutions were followed relentlessly by military pronunciamientos all through the century, as political colours deepened from rosy hues to scarlet and black. Reunions were everywhere in the cafés; but of public union there was none. It was indeed a period of intellectual doubt and spiritual confusion

in which the artist suffered no less than the common man. It was the provincial orator and the local pamphleteer who found life profitable in the big cities, for rhetorical patchwork most fittingly expressed the thread-bare notions of many people. The artist, however, unless he was content to hack for the politicians' penny, found few wealthy patrons to house and encourage him and so the more thoughtful turned to cultivate the provincial garden from which there grew up by degrees a rich development of Spanish arts by regional distinctions and tastes.

But perhaps equal to the vague sense of having fallen behind in material ways was the uneasy awareness that Spain was being dragged into the European secularization of life. This change, of course, affected the creative man very deeply in a country which had been more Catholic than Rome, and in whose Church he had found his most appreciative, and most stable patron; the musician suffered with the rest. Few Spanish composers of first rank in modern times have produced devotional works, or sought, as did the ancestors of their craft, to make "consonance with God". It is odd that this departure from an ancient tradition has been so little remarked. (Though the efforts of critics associated with Franco's régime to relate the national conscience to a dimension more significant than the individual one—this is how they describe their aims—has had some influence on writers, it has not had much effect on music.)

It was not until 1866 that a Beethoven symphony was first performed in its entirety in Spain; this was the Symphony in A. In the next year, however, two symphonies were heard, the C minor and the *Pastoral*. In this year Enrique Granados was born and Felipe Pedrell began to write the first of those combative articles in which enthusiasm covered up a regrettable degree of mental confusion. (For all his ideals Pedrell wrote some pages of music which are best forgotten; they are no worse than many other examples of his day, which are certainly no better than they need be.)

The emphasis which has been placed on Pedrell's achievements has unfortunately obscured the merit of Asenjo Barbieri. Both worked for the same cause—the renovation of Spanish music—but it was Barbieri who founded the Sociedad de Conciertos, which first performed Beethoven's symphonies, and who inaugurated those open-air programmes which have taken an important part in Spanish musical education. The publication of the *Colección del Palacio* was not his only contribution to early research into old Spanish music; Pedrell, himself, drew largely on Barbieri's vast hoard of manuscripts. It was Barbieri, too, who composed the zarzuelas *Pan y toros* (1864) and *El barberillo de Lavapiés* (1874)—the book of this, by the way, was written by Larra's son—and though the young Granados was for a time a pupil of Pedrell and warmly esteemed the older man's "preciosos consejos" it is clear that in his natural taste, he followed Barbieri, whether consciously or not. In his own works Pedrell produced but a wan progeny; as spiritual adviser to young musicians, however, he had a power to quicken their talents with a blessing that was apostolic in its fruitfulness.

Guidance was what the younger generation needed most, and their response to it was immediate. In Falla this response was more decisive and more

prompt because he had an initial advantage over Granados and Albéniz, the advantage of a higher education and a literary inclination, and though perhaps not more originally gifted he saw clearly and early what he was about and whither he would go, without having to take the thorny road of trial and error which they trod. His earliest music is quite as bad as anybody else's. To compare his first songs with the *Tres Melodías* composed to verses by Gautier—sometimes erroneously referred to as his first songs—is to comprehend the gulf which lies between Spanish music of the nineteenth century and that of the twentieth; the haven of Debussy's counsel is seen at work in the *Melodías*. But it was partly because his mind was already prepared by a certain education of taste that Falla responded with such completeness to the French composer's guidance. Is it conceivable that Albéniz could have written so banal a piece as *Mallorca* had his mind received, for instance, such impressions as are contained in Unamuno's evocation of the island? But as Unamuno concludes

"Solo él que con el alma recogida ha oído en silencio el chirriar de las cigarras estre-
mecidas de sol en las copas de los viejos olivos de Valldemosa puede aprovechar la
lección espiritual de Mallorca."

Albéniz travelled fast, too fast, in fact, for such contemplation. He was born with the precocious alert awareness of the *petit gamin* and his brilliance comes from a snap-shooting precision; the precise titles he gives to his pieces contrast sharply with Granados' blurred focus and vague evocations.

Granados made attempts to break away from the nineteenth century in Spain but with none of the success of Falla and Albéniz, and it is because he was so much the heir of the past generation that his music has a peculiar interest which theirs lack. He belongs, too, by birth to a Spain which has always been different from theirs, to that other Spain of the north which, though lying remote beyond Castile, has yet always made a very real contribution to national life, permeating it in a lyrical fashion of its own, quite distinct from the vivid impact of Andalusia and Catalonia. Indeed, Granados himself is temperamentally akin to the poetess Rosalía de Castro, one of whose most famous poems—*A gaita* gallega*—has the refrain "Non canta, que chora"—it does not sing; it weeps. Such moods were the source of much of his outpourings as they were of hers. A vague idealism, a diffidence morbid to the point of self-mistrust were common to both; both were prone to cling to a child's perplexities late in life and on their horizons wonders loomed larger than life. Each was romantic by nature rather than passionate, and they equalled one another in an extremely flexible expression of it. It would be interesting to discover the exact locality from which Granados' mother's family originally came, for there are some curious resemblances in his music to traits common to the Galaico-Portuguese music and verse tradition—lyrical melody, an exquisite sense of modulation, cadential turns, a rotundity of phraseology and an inherent expressiveness of style: "é o estilo expressivo raiz da música portuguesa" (Sampaio Ribeiro). There are traces in him, too, of the "languidez lusitana" which follows so quickly upon the equally traditional initial impetuosity. The

* gaita = bagpipe.

search for contrary sonority, of which Granados was naturally fond, is marked in old Portuguese keyboard music; it must be remembered that the Portuguese showed a preference for keyboard instruments which were less percussive than those in favour in Spain. Pianists generally seem to make little or no difference of touch when turning from Albéniz and Falla to Granados; in this they are mistaken. When we sit down with Granados it is to partake of sweet wine, not an aperitif.

To another aspect of his music, its candour and spontaneity, a clue is given by the painter Gauguin, who had Peruvian as well as Spanish blood in his veins

"I believe a man finds it necessary to play in some moments of life; but this infantile strain is far from being prejudicial to the seriousness of his work, for on the contrary it imparts to it *dulzura, alegría e inocencia*."

Granados showed that these three strains were part of his nature as well as part of his work. He remained a child of hope to his last day. But if it was easier for him to find a new theme than to conclude an old one, it was chiefly because his melodic gift was inexhaustible and irresistible. He had a tenderness for little things, but was never content with the perfecting of this gift. Ever searching for a larger subject, when he found one his own rhapsodic urge was so impetuous that its force was often spent before he could control it.

Granados reveals some of these characteristics in the sketch he drew of himself as a *majo de Goya*; eyes, mouth and chin show a creature sensitive to every change in the emotional atmosphere. His childhood in a provincial household, surrounded by women—he was "*muy mimado en casa*"—did nothing to fortify or fix this sensibility. In the music-room of his home at San Salvador Pau Casals kept a rough-cast model of Granados' hands; they are extraordinarily long, delicately worn in texture, and though the muscular development of a virtuoso-pianist is plain to see, the hands are unusually feminine.

Some writers—not Spaniards—have read a great deal too much into the fact that his father came from Havana—Cuba, by the way, was longest in touch with the mother country and the nearest of American colonies, though commentators make no distinctions of this sort when in a hurry to produce effect. Rosalía de Castro's poems found early and continuous success in Havana, where there were many Galician families; it was in this colony of Galicians in Cuba that the subscription for her memorial was founded. One speaks of his Creole nonchalance and volupté; another, to repeat the same idea but in more vivid colour, of course, goes so far as to state that there is Creole "bland lasciviousness" in his work. It is a pity we have been given no chapter and verse for this. It is curious to watch the actual growth of legend, but when it takes a turn so grossly false, it is time to draw attention to it. Spaniards do not seem to show any concern in this matter; probably because they are aware that the supreme gift of Granados is that through him the course of their national music flows unimpeded, uninterrupted and clear. No cerebral deflection disturbs its way; it is true rhapsody.

We hear much of the effect on Spanish music of Falla's "return to Scarlatti". Yet we hear nothing nowadays of the work done by Granados in editing and transcribing some twenty-six of the unpublished sonatas. But there is a world of difference between the Scarlatti of Falla and the Scarlatti of Granados. Falla sees him as the last of a line, and through him returns to an older tradition. Granados vibrates to the last echo of Scarlatti in his influence on the work of the *petit-maitre* style of the old Madrid stage. Aglow with the worship of Goya, whose characters find musical setting in the sainetes and tonadillas, Granados fuses the essence of both masters as it lingered in the memory of those grandparents who had stayed at home and not gone about or up in the world. And so he becomes a true, though slender link which joins present Spain to the past, and precisely because he himself was chained to the age from which others seemed to have the better fortune to escape. It is not unlikely that a younger generation of Spaniards will discover this and turn to examine those five lyrical dramas which he composed to the libretti of the poet Apeles Mestres. Though these enjoyed undisputed success when produced, it is his zarzuela *María del Carmen* which shows an undeniable persistence to return to the stage again. There have been three revivals of this during the past ten years. After a preliminary production in Barcelona, the occasion of Casals' first appearance as a conductor, it was put on in Madrid, in 1898, where it was hailed as "a strong pillar on which to raise the glorious edifice of Spanish opera" (*sic*). On the first night Granados was obliged to take twelve calls; and all Madrid talked of the prodigious development of the talented composer of piano and chamber works; Casals had also participated in the first performances of the Quintet in G minor and the Trio in C.

One of the charms of *María del Carmen* is the use Granados makes in it of genuine Murcian music; such examples as the parranda, in particular, show him at his most "gracioso". This work differs, as does the *Goyescas*, from those five lyrical dramas, in that the use of Spanish themes is here consciously employed upon subjects which are equally national in character. Its argument was inspired by the popular *copla*

"Para mirarla, mis ojos; para quererla, mi pecho; para dormirla, mis brazos; para guardarla, mi hierro."

It seems necessary, nowadays, to remind people that the lyrical dramas were enthusiastically received on their production, and that though as yet they have not been revived their existence confutes the opinions expressed by many people that the extension into dramatic form of the *Goyescas* suite was a mere isolated excursion from Granados' salon work.

Something, too, perhaps requires to be said about Granados' use of rhythm and melody. The peculiar buoyancy of his rhythm does not seem immediately apparent to ears expecting the well-tried rhythmic patterns upon which Spanish musicians often too easily depend for the greater part of their effect. But it is precisely the basically monotonous insistence on rhythm of a very few varieties above all other considerations which compels the resort to evasive little tricks that are excusable enough when the rigidity of the rhythmic law imposed by tradition is considered, but which quickly degenerate into tyrannical

and tiresome stylizations in which any creative originality becomes atrophied. Granados, by his birth, was free of this tyranny and convention; and being less obsessed by the need to escape from the Andalusian idioms was able to give more play to his other musical faculties—notably to the development of melody and its modulation. In his finest work he reveals the felicity of his intuitive sense in the way both are so interwrought as to appear indissoluble. The range of his melodic gift has not yet been investigated, but the manner in which his imaginative faculty played upon this gift can be studied, most naturally, in his songs, where the text—sometimes the associations which certain words and phrases form in the mind rather than the surface text itself—gives definite clues to the thought uppermost in his mind at a given moment. In *El Majo Olvidado*—the Forgotten Lover—for example, one particular characteristic of his can be seen in the sharp boldness of interval-spanning which he employs in the first part of the song to express unbearable anguish—a melodic line which it would be difficult to parallel in the whole of Spanish music—the asymmetry of intervals within the phrases and the asymmetry of these phrases one to another express agitation of mood which the poet was not able to put into the words. They also reveal considerable originality of musical feeling. By contrast the second section of this song creeps like a ghost step by step up the scale, chained to a fixed harmonic base; and so naturally in purely musical terms we reach the mood of mournful resignation to inevitable fate. Here one phrase is the mere echo of its predecessor, and the contrast is made complete. Typically, the epitaph is sighed out by the piano alone with a delicate depth of dropping modulation which is one of Granados' chief graces. Though Schumann had this gift for final pianistic comment, it is perhaps only in Chopin that we find the same fine fragile manner of expressing a sadness beyond words. The same kind of musical working out of the poet's thought is to be found to a lesser degree in the set of three songs, *La Maja Dolorosa*. The first has much of the same bold interval-spanning to express the agitation of a woman who cannot resign herself to loss: as the intervals become less acute a subdued movement through the scale suggests once more a sense of inevitable fate. But the finest workmanship in these three songs is to be found in the piano writing which knits them together, moving almost imperceptibly from the hammered quavers in the closing of the first towards the grave *punteado* of the last song through which the melody distils its memories of "tiempos pasados". *Punteado* bass provides the structure of *El Mirar de la Maja*, too. Here, as in the *Majo Olvidado* we find five-bar phrases—naturally poised—not distended four-bar phrases. A fixed progression of five chords is maintained throughout the song; only just before the final cadence does the modulation fall away characteristically, in a dying strain. Considering the economy of means, the passionate grace evoked appears extraordinary until one recollects the dramatically intense effect which Purcell drew from melodies rising out of a ground-bass in which down-dropping chromaticism echoes the voiced complaint. Granados' nice sense of distinction between the decades of Scarlatti's own production and those of his successors appears in *La Maja de Goya*. In itself a trifle of four pages of small apparent musical importance, the first two pages

are a development of a Scarlatti sonata at the piano; in the song which follows—completing the binary form—the mood shifts in an indefinable way to the slightly later style of the popular tonadilla. It is unerringly done, in that quick, slight way of which Granados was master. These are but a few instances of the workmanship on which claims could be made that Granados continued to expand the potentialities of Scarlatti's technique into the nineteenth century. Examples of his rhapsodic vein in brief are the *Allegro de Concierto* and the *Eternal Elegy*. His friends have told me that the *Allegro* is emphatically characteristic of his exuberant improvisation—"he could keep it up for hours". Its pounding vitality never slackens through all the changes of the three sections, development, recapitulation and coda. The *Elegy*, like its Catalan text by Apeles Mestres, is purely lyrical. Less intricate than much of his music, it conveys the nostalgia of *nessun maggior dolore* in which poets of the northern regions love to wreath their thoughts: Granados' poetic-musical response to the work of artists in other media was always immediate. Adolfo Salazar enquired once where Granados got the idea of the vast undertaking of a symphonic poem in four parts on the theme of Dante. It was the fifteenth century Spanish poet the Marqués de Santillana who translated these lines from *The Inferno* so that they became one of the most familiar verses in Spain. Santillana was also a fervent follower of Petrarch and *Petrarca* was the only lyrical drama by Granados which was never performed. It was through Santillana's poetic work that the rhythm of the galician *serranilla* became definitely acclimatized in the Castilian Parnassus, and when he wrote of "las sonoras melodías é dulces modulaciones" which he loved, he expressed a taste for those qualities which give Granados' music its distinction.

There is a freakishness about the composition of Granados' last work which would make its performance a curiosity in any musical season. It was never written down, but he happened to play it over to some friends in New York before sailing on his last voyage. The piano's recording mechanism was in action at the time. Has that record been preserved? It was a reverie on the themes for his next work and might throw light on those last remarks of his that, in spite of appearances—he meant his first grey hairs,—he felt certain he was on the threshold of new possibilities. His last productions had shown an increasing elaboration. Was this a self-spun cocoon in which he had enveloped himself until ready to burst into other forms of activity? Or was he still a child of hope?

Je chante pour moi-même, said Carmen. She voiced the impulse of the best Spanish musicians when she said this, and Granados is among them. Critics write that he has left no school; considering the slow assimilative character of the Spaniards, it is early yet to give a verdict. It seems significant, however, that all over Spain modest guitar-players are already busily "ploughing back" into the national patrimony some of his most personal musical thoughts and expressions in "breaks", interludes, fantasias, improvisations, and so on. In such a traditional way alone, Granados remains a vital, germinating force.

London Wind-Instrument Makers of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

BY

LYNDESAY G. LANGWILL

A BIBLIOGRAPHY devoted to the subject of musical instruments includes but few books dealing with the craft of the instrument-maker and these relate mainly to stringed instruments. Orchestral wind-instruments have indeed received attention of late, notably *Musical Wind Instruments*, Adam Carse (London, 1939), and *European Musical Instruments*, Canon Galpin (London, 1937), and it may be of interest to recall some of the London makers of brass and wood-wind instruments in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Of some makers, only their name and occasionally their address is now known, saved from oblivion by inscriptions on surviving specimens of their handiwork. Other makers have left us Trade Cards, those quaint early advertisements which have appealed to the taste of collectors and are preserved, for example, in the Banks and Bagford Collections of the British Museum, and in the private collection of Sir Ambrose Heal. Other names on instruments are frequently those of music publishers and dealers. For much information concerning them, the author desires to make full acknowledgement to the late Frank Kidson's excellent *British Music Publishers* (London 1900).

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY BRASS MAKERS

Among the earliest seventeenth century trade cards of wind instrument-makers is that of John Ashbury, and the engraving is that of John Sturt (1658-1730). The design incorporates a punch bowl around which is engraved the following:—

John Ashbury, Sworn Servant in Ordinary to his Most Sacred Maj^{tie} King William & Major Hautboy to his Own Regiment of Foot Guards, Makes all sorts of Wind Musical Instruments, viz^t Flutes, Hautboys, Bassoons, &c., Allso Punch Bowles. He being the first Inventor of the Fountain or Pump Punch Bowl. And aliso turns all manner of Curious works in any sort of hard Wood or Ivory and setts in Artificiall Teeth at his House at ye Corner of Peters Court in St. Martins Lane in the Fields.

The letters of the words "Musical Instruments" are ingeniously made up of tiny recorders, oboes, bassoons and horns. No specimen of Ashbury's work is now known, but, from the Lord Chamberlain's Records (Temp. William & Mary) we read:—

"1690, Apl. 12: John Ashbury appointed fife, in the place of Clement Newth deceased;"

and at the foot of a list of sixteen trumpeters to whom annual payments were made in 1699 we find "John Ashbury, fife, £24".

The Lord Chamberlain's Records of 11th June, 1660 reveal the appointment as trumpeter in ordinary of Simon Beale, and he is mentioned by Pepys in his

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Trade-card of John Ashbury (ca. 1690-1700), from the original in the Bagford Collection in the British Museum.

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Diary under date 16th December, 1660, as "Simon Beale the Trumpeter", and, further on, as "late of Oliver's Guard". At the Charles II Loan Exhibition in 1932, a trumpet of copper alloy, nearly brass in colour with silver mounts, was lent by Mr. Percival Griffiths, F.S.A. This instrument, from the collection of the Earl of Dartmouth, was known as "The Luck of Woodsome Hall", and was described thus: "Herald's trumpet of brass with silver bands, centre boss, and wide border to the mouth; chased with amorini and flowers. The silver border to the bell of the trumpet bears the maker's name, Simon Beale, and the date 1667". This trumpet was sold at Christie's in May, 1939, and seems to be the only surviving specimen of Beale's workmanship.

Other references in *The King's Musick* record in 1661 a salary of £60 per annum to Beale among a dozen Royal Trumpeters; in 1662 a warrant to deliver "to Symon Beale . . . one silver trumpet, his own trumpet being taken from him for his Majesty's service in Ireland". In 1663, Beale was one of four Trumpeters in Ordinary to receive riding charges of 5s. per diem while attending the King for four weeks at Tunbridge. In 1670 Beale and another trumpeter received "two silver trumpetts of the same quality, value and proportion as they have formerly received, they first returning in their old trumpetts". We observe here the value attaching to silver trumpets at that period. In 1676 we have a record of the theft of Beale's trumpet. A warrant was granted "for the delivery of one silver trumpet to Symon Beale, as one of the silver trumpets in his custody was lately lost and stolen from off the Horse Guard and cannot be heard of". In 1680 a final reference to Beale concerns his petition "against Joseph Walker, Trumpeter". Walker was to appear three days later, but whether or not he did so, or with what result, we are not informed. Walker evidently died in 1681, and there is no further allusion to Beale.

A second contemporary of Ashbury, and, like him, a player as well as a maker, was William Bull, appointed "Trumpeter Extraordinary" to Charles II in 1666, and "Trumpeter in Ordinary" to that monarch in 1677. *The Loyal Protestant*, 7th March, 168(2), contains the following announcement:—

"William Bull, one of his Majesty's Trumpeters in Ordinary, and trumpet maker, is remov'd from the Trumpet and Horn in Salisbury Street, near the Strand, to the Trumpet and Horn at the lower end of the Haymarket near the Pall Mall end; where any Gentleman may be furnished with Trumpets, French Horns, speaking trumpets, and Flasks of all sorts both Silver and Brass".

On the accession of James II in 1685, Bull was again sworn Trumpeter in Ordinary. In the following year, two of the Royal trumpets were "delivered to Mr. Bull . . . to be new made", and subsequent similar entries occur in 1688, showing that Bull had acquired skill as a maker of the silver trumpets, in use then, as now, for State Ceremonial. In 1689 he was again admitted as one of the sixteen trumpeters of William and Mary, and attended the King on his voyage to Holland in 1690, receiving a livery for the purpose and "riding charges" of 5s. *per diem*. In 1694 there is recorded "the petition of William Bull, trumpeter, to take his course at law against Robert Maugridge, kettle-drummer, for scandalous words". Maugridge was Royal kettle-drummer from 1662-1699, and one wonders what he said against a fellow-musician

with whom he had been so long associated. In 1695 Bull was still repairing trumpets, in addition to fulfilling his duties as trumpeter at 5s. *per diem*. In 1699 he was included in the pay-roll with Ashbury above referred to, but resigned in 1700. An advertisement in the *Post Boy* of 18th June, 1700 announces Bull's recent removal from the Trumpet and Horn in the Haymarket to "Castle Street, by Leicester Fields near the Muse, where all Gentlemen may be furnished with Hunting Horns and Trumpets, both Silver and Brass". From this address Bull issued a trade card (in the Banks Collection) depicting a curious assortment consisting of French and Hunting Horns, trumpets, a speaking trumpet, ear trumpet, powder flasks and a pair of kettle-drums draped with livery bearing the cypher of William of Orange. Below we read:

"All Sorts of Trumpetts and Kettle Drums, French Hornes, Speaking Trumpetts, Hearing Hornes for Deafe people and all Sorts of powder flasks and allso Wind Gunes made and minded by William Bull, Trumpett Maker to his Maiestie. Who liveth att the Signe of the Trumpett and Horne in Castal Street Neare the Muyse."¹

Happily a few specimens of Bull's instruments survive. At the Royal Military Exhibition, 1890, a copper Trumpet in D with silver boss and mounts was lent, the bell being ornamented with figures of cherubim relieved by floriated designs and embossed "William Bull, Londini, Fecit". This instrument (now in the London Museum) is shown in Plate X of Day's splendid Catalogue of the 1890 Exhibition. A second trumpet by Bull, but wholly of silver and a far finer instrument probably of a much later date, was also for some time on loan in the London Museum. A third interesting survival is a Horn in F by Bull dated 1699 and this was lent by the Rev. Canon Galpin at the International Music Exhibition, 1900 (illustrated in *Old English Instruments of Music*: plate XXXVII).

Another Royal musician who was both a player and maker of trumpets was Cuthbert Collins to whom references occur in the Lord Chamberlain's records from 1625 to 1641.

One other trumpet-maker of the seventeenth century is known by a trumpet engraved "Augustine Dudley, London, 1651". This instrument, now in the London Museum, is said to have been used at the Battle of Worcester. As shown in Plate XLI of Canon Galpin's *Old English Instruments of Music*, it has unfortunately lost the silver "Ball" and sheathing of the bell tube.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The eighteenth century provides quite a number of brass makers. In one or two cases they are known only from their names being engraved on instruments; in others, the maker's inventive capacity has earned for him a place in Grove's *Dictionary of Music*.

In the former category, mention may be made of John Christopher Hofmaster (or Hofmeister), Piccadilly, whose name appears on a silver Trumpet in D and a pair of French Horns at the 1890 Exhibition. The trumpet is

¹ The Royal Mews stood on the site of the National Gallery, and "was so called of the King's falcons there kept" (Stowe).

undated, but both the Horns are dated "17.." with the last two figures missing. They were acquired by Sir Samuel Hellier in 1735, and Mr. W. F. H. Blandford, the acknowledged authority on the horn, is of the opinion that the horns are of Viennese origin, imported by Hofmaster who could then engrave a later date if he did not sell them at once.² Unfortunately all trace of these two interesting instruments is lost and Mr. Blandford, who has blown them, would greatly like to know of their whereabouts.

"Nicholas Winkings, Maker, London" is all we know of the maker of a pair of trumpets in D, also purchased by Sir Samuel Hellier in 1735, and exhibited at the 1890 Exhibition. There is also a record of a Horn by Winkings.

A few years ago Mr. Blandford spent some time searching Rate-Books from 1700 onwards in an unsuccessful attempt to trace the business successor of William Bull. A trumpet in D \flat , doubtless in D at the low pitch of the period, lent to the 1890 Exhibition, is engraved "John Harris, Londini, Fecit", and from close similarity to the fine workmanship of William Bull, Mr. Blandford conjectures that Harris may have been Bull's successor. This Harris trumpet is illustrated in Hipkins & Gibb's *Musical Instruments Historic and Rare*, Plate XXXVI. J. P. Hore's *The History of the Royal Buckhounds* (London, 1893) records the purchase of ten brass french horns from Harris as early as 1717, and he was probably the best of all the eighteenth century trumpet-makers. It may be taken as indicative of his fine workmanship that several of his instruments were converted into slide-trumpets, e.g. one in the collection of the Royal College of Music, and another in that of Mr. P. A. T. Bate. A third slide-trumpet engraved "William Harris" is in the Rimmer Collection in Wigan Public Library. It is possible that this William Harris is the same as that included, with his brother, Baker Harris, among the only seven harpsichord-makers in London throughout a great part of the eighteenth century. Dr. Busby in his *Concert Room and Orchestra Anecdotes* III, p. 127, (London, 1825), gives the list of seven names and adds that the elder Harris (William) lived in Fetter Lane, Fleet Street; and the younger in Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury.

William Shaw, 21, Red Lion Street, Holborn, made silver trumpets at the close of the eighteenth century, and until 1803 at least. Adopting the firm name, Shaw & Son, he supplied in 1813 two State Silver Trumpets, which were lent by H. M. Queen Victoria at the 1890 Exhibition. It has been suggested, but without any confirmation, that John Shaw, farmer, of Glossop, who in 1824 took out a patent for "Transverse spring slides for trumpets, trombones, French Horns, etc.", was a son of William Shaw. Among a number of silver trumpets in the Jewel Tower, London, are two marked Shaw & Son and one by Shaw. There are also three brass trumpets by William Shaw at Warwick Castle, and a semi-circular copper hunting horn in the Castle Museum, York.

The Berlin Hochschule Collection contains a Hand Horn in C engraved "John Benith, London, 1738" of whom nothing is known.

At the close of the century, William Sandbach, an ironmonger of 40 Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road, was making trumpets and hand horns and,

² Illustrated in *English Music 1604-1904* (London, 1906), p. 461.

in the Kneller Hall Collection, there is a unique keyed trumpet of his making.³ Between 1828 and 1832 the business became Sandbach & Wyatt "to the Army and the Hon. Board of Ordnance," but seems to have been wound up in 1835.

Nothing is known of Smith & Son, whose name is engraved on a hand horn (the left-handed one of a pair of horns) in the Bate Collection. The instrument dates from the mid-eighteenth century, but was presumably altered by Key of Charing Cross *ca.* 1810, who stamped it as sold by him.

The introduction of the slide trumpet to England occurred in the late eighteenth century, and the credit is due to a London maker, R. Woodham, a watchmaker near Red Lion Square. In 1780 he set up a workshop for making brass and copper instruments, acquiring a reputation as a maker of trombones, French horns, bugles, slide trumpets and ophicleides, and he fulfilled numerous orders for the business of D'Almaine. A slide trumpet in the Galpin Collection (*Old English Instruments*, Plate XLII) bears the inscription "Woodham, Inventor and Maker, Exeter Court, Strand", and this type was introduced about 1804 by John Hyde, a famous trumpeter, and was played with great success by Thomas Harper, father and son, and others, until after the mid-nineteenth century. Woodham died in 1795 and the business became Keat & Sons.

No account, however brief, of makers and inventors of brass instruments in the eighteenth century would be complete without mention of Charles Clagget of Long Acre, Music Master and "Harmonizer of Musical Instruments, under the patronage of the King". Born in Waterford in 1740, he was at first a theatre violinist in Dublin, later a conductor in Liverpool and Manchester, and settled in London in 1776, the year of his first patent for improvements of the violin and other finger-board instruments. In 1788 he took out a patent (No. 1664) for a series of improvements and inventions, *inter alia*, "a method of uniting together two French horns or trumpets (one in D and the other in E \flat) in such manner that the same mouthpiece may be applied to either of them instantaneously", thereby getting the advantage of a complete chromatic scale. This invention, like all Clagget's others, had no success, but deserves greater attention than it has as yet received from those interested in the evolution of the brass. His exceedingly rare publication *Musical Phaenomena* (London, 1793) which includes a portrait of Clagget, is curiously reticent concerning the nature of the "valve" mechanism used to divert the wind column into the desired pitch of trumpet or horn. No specimen of Clagget's double-trumpet or horn is known, but Canon Galpin investigated the matter and made a working model of the valve. He dealt with the subject and reproduced Clagget's double trumpet in *European Musical Instruments* (1937). Clagget kept at his house in Greek Street, Soho, a Musical Museum consisting of a collection of his improved musical instruments which he exhibited at the Hanover Square Rooms about 1791 and he gave in 1793, at the King's Arms Tavern, Cornhill, and in the New Rooms, Bath, concerts at which several instruments invented or improved by him were played. At Bath Messrs.

³ An application to the trumpet tube of the system of keys used by Joseph Halliday in his "Royal Kent Bugle".

Milgrove and Henrard were the double-horn soloists. Clagget is thought to have died about 1795.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY WOOD-WIND MAKERS

Of the seventeenth century London wood-wind makers one is known only by references in Pepys' Diary. In 1668 Pepys relates how enchanted he was by the soft music of recorders in Massinger's *The Virgin Martyr*, and how he decided to learn to play that instrument and have his wife taught likewise. In 1667 he had ordered a pair of flageolets from "one Drumbleby, a maker of flageolets, the best in towne", and engaged Greeting the flageolet master to teach Mrs. Pepys. In 1668 Pepys returned to Drumbleby and bought a recorder. It is strange that there is no other contemporary or subsequent allusion to Drumbleby.

The most celebrated seventeenth century wood-wind maker was undoubtedly Thomas Stanesby Senior, to whom, with his son, reference will be made later.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY WOOD-WIND MAKERS

Two London businesses of the name Bland existed in the closing years of the eighteenth century. One was Anne Bland of Bland & Weller, to whom reference is made below (under Weller). The other was John Bland from 1779 to 1794 at 45 High Holborn, at the corner of New Oxford Street. Well-known as a music-seller and publisher, he is best remembered for being instrumental in bringing Haydn to London in 1787. That he dealt in instruments is proved by an entry in the accounts of the Churchwardens of St. Giles, Northampton, which record the purchase of a bassoon from "Bland of Holborn" at a cost of £4 13s. 6d. His business became successively Lewis Houston & Hyde (1794-96), Francis Linley (1796-1800), William Hodsoll (1800-c. 1840), after which the premises were occupied by the song-publisher, Zenas T. Purday.

The following trade card is in the Banks Collection:—

"William Cotton, Wind instrument maker, at the Hautboy and two Flutes in Bride Lane Court near Fleet Street, London. Makes and sells all sorts of Wind Instruments, viz. Bassoons, Hautboys, German and Common Flutes in ye neatest manner. N.B. All sorts of Instruments mended."

Although no specimen of William Cotton's work is known, he was doubtless connected with Robert Cotton, maker of a 1-key flute and an oboe in the Horniman Museum. The writer is indebted to Mr. F. G. Rendall of the British Museum for information to the effect that in a litigation in March 1770, a witness was "Robert Cotton, musical instrument maker, aged 35, residing at the house of Mr. William Cotton in Bride Lane Court, musical instrument maker".

Likewise in the Banks Collection may be seen the following:—

"Thomas Collett, At the sign of the French Horn and Violin, opposite the Waxwork, Fleet Street, Buys, sells and likewise puts in order all sorts of Musick and Musical Instruments; also French Horns sold and taught. Where may be had a Set of Musick, or a pair of French Horns for any entertainment on timely notice."

No instrument of Collett's is known, but the reference to the Waxwork in Fleet Street indicates the eighteenth century as his working period.

Another maker with a somewhat similar name is Thomas Collier, London, who made wood-wind about 1770. Recently a beautiful oboe by Collier was sent to the writer for inspection. In perfect condition, it is of boxwood with three silver keys of which one is the obsolete duplicate D# key. A very interesting large tenor oboe of Collier with two keys and a small right-angled crook (formerly in the Glen Collection and now in Glasgow Art Galleries) is illustrated in Engel's Catalogue of the 1872 Exhibition, and a two-keyed oboe is in the Swindon Public Museum. A Collier clarinet is in Mr. Rendall's Collection and a five-keyed Bassoon in the Herts. County Museum, St. Albans.

It will be observed how frequent in the eighteenth century are references to the French horn. It was, of course, the period when the horn came into its own and the horn virtuoso gained an international reputation. It is very probable, however, that many of those who advertised horns were no more than dealers or importers. Such probably was Peter Thompson:—

"At the Violin, Hautboy, and German Flute, the West End of St. Paul's Church-yard. Makes, mends and sells all sorts of Musical Instruments, *Vizt.* Violins, Bass Violins, Viols, Hautboys, German and English Flutes, Harpsicords, Spinnets, French Horns, Trumpets, etc."

No wind instrument by Thompson is known, but music of c. 1758 exists bearing his imprint and his name occurs in the rare *Musical Directory* of 1794.

R. Morley-Pegge in his "Evolution of the Modern French Horn from 1750 to the Present Day"⁴ has expressed the opinion that the Inventionshorn made its appearance in or about 1753, in Dresden. It would, therefore be of great interest to know more of the maker and type of horn mentioned in the following English reference which does not appear to have attracted attention. In *The Origin and Progress of the Meeting of the Three Choirs* (Gloucester, 1895), p. 32, it is recorded that at Worcester in 1755, among the performers mentioned in the advertisement were "Millar and Adcock, both celebrated bassoon-players, and Messing, an eminent performer on the chromatic French Horn".

"At the sign of the two Flutes and Violin opposite St. Clement's Church in the Strand" was the address for nearly half a century of Thomas Cahusac, founder, *circa* 1755, of an important business of instrument making, both wood-wind and violins, etc. Assumed to be of Huguenot origin, Cahusac married a daughter of Benjamin Banks of Salisbury (the noted violin and cello maker), and had two sons, Thomas and William Maurice, to whom, at his death in 1798, Cahusac bequeathed his tools, materials and stock-in-trade. An obituary notice in *The Gentleman's Magazine* describes Cahusac Senior as "the oldest musical instrument maker in and near London". Thomas Junior, after having for a few years a music shop of his own in Great Newport Street, near Long Acre, joined his father and brother in partnership at 196 Strand, and the two brothers continued in 1799 after their father's death. The Ambrose Heal Collection contains a trade card of W. M. Cahusac, 196

⁴ *Proceedings of the Musical Association*, 1942-43, p. 44.

Strand, and the Banks Collection one of T. & W. M. Cahusac, of the same address, makers "Wholesale, Retail and for Exportation", but by 1802 Thomas had set up at 41 Haymarket, and William, after removing about 1814 to 79 Holborn, retired *circa* 1816.

The writer has in his Bassoon Collection an interesting four-keyed bassoon stamped "Cahusac, London, 1769", formerly used in Brailes Parish Church, Warwickshire;⁵ and a list of Cahusac instruments includes flutes (1 to 6 keys), oboes (two-keyed), a straight tenor oboe (two-keyed), clarinets (five-keyed), and bassoons (4 to 6 keys).

Probably the best-known and earliest English wood-wind makers of repute were the Stanesbys—both father and son being Thomas by name. It is strange that neither is mentioned in *Grove*, whereas Hawkins, Burney, Schilling and Mendel considered them worthy of record. Stanesby Senior lived for many years in Stonecutter Street, leading from Shoe Lane to the Fleet Market (later Farringdon Market). His name occurs in the Register of the Company of Turners in the City of London in 1706, when his son Thomas was bound as apprentice to his father. The will of Stanesby Senior, dated 11th July 1734, and proved 12th September in the same year, records the bequest of all his pattern instruments and working tools to his son Thomas and the residue equally to him and two married daughters. Stanesby Senior made recorders, oboes (two-three keys), bassoons and double-bassoons, stamping them "T. Stanesby" with a star, or "Stanesby Senior". Several of his recorders and oboes survive, but of Stanesby bassoons the two surviving specimens—one in Canon Galpin's Collection, dated 1747 and marked "Muraeus", and the other in the Horniman Museum, London—are both by Stanesby Junior, as is also the unique four-keyed double-bassoon, dated 1739, 8 ft. 4 in. in height, preserved in the National Museum of Ireland, Dublin.⁶ Handel is stated to have commissioned Stanesby Senior to make him a double-bassoon for use in the Coronation Anthem in 1727, but little success attended these eighteenth century double-bassoons. Burney tells us that J. F. Lampe, Handel's bassoonist, made an unsuccessful attempt to play one in 1727 and Ashley was equally unfortunate at the Handel Commemoration in 1784 if we may believe Parke's *Memoirs* and Busby's *Anecdotes*.

Stanesby Junior was born in 1692 and, after apprenticeship to his father as already stated, lived and worked over the Temple Exchange in Fleet Street in the Parish of Saint Dunstan, probably at first in partnership with his father whom he survived by only twenty years. A score or so of his instruments survive to testify to his skill as a maker of recorders, one-key flutes in boxwood and ivory, two-key oboes, tenor oboes (of the long straight type), four-key bassoons and a double-bassoon. He died on 2nd March, 1754 and was buried in St. Pancras Churchyard where in Hawkins' day there was a tombstone inscribed as follows:—

"Here lies the body of the ingenious Thomas Stanesby, musical wind-instrument maker: esteemed the most eminent man in his profession of any in Europe. A facetious

⁵ Illustrated in *Musical Times* (April, 1937), in the writer's article "The Cortal", 1550-1750.

⁶ Illustrated and described in "The Double Bassoon: Its Origin and Development", by L. G. Langwill in *Proceedings of the Musical Association*, 1942-43.

companion, a sincere friend: upright and just in all his dealings; ready to serve and relieve the distressed; strictly adhering to his word, even upon the most trivial occasions, and regretted by all who had the happiness and pleasure of his acquaintance. Obiti 2 Mart. 1754, Aetat. suae, 62."

From his will, dated 6th October, 1752, and proved on 2nd March, 1754, it appears that he was predeceased by his wife and that he left no children. He bequeathed all his working tools and unfinished work to his apprentice, Caleb Gedney, a maker known by at least two four-keyed bassoons and a tenor oboe. Gedney's burial in 1769 in Dunstan West is recorded in *Boyd's London Burials*.⁷

The name of Stanesby—it is not known whether Thomas Senior or Junior—is associated with the only recorded instance of an English-made Cervelat, Rackett or Sausage Bassoon, that curious bobbin-shaped double-reed seventeenth century wood-wind instrument with cylindrical bore coiled ninefold within so that, although but a few inches in height, its pitch was that of a bassoon. Hawkins tells us that Stanesby "was a diligent peruser both of Mersenne and Kircher" and following the directions of the former as closely as possible, constructed a Cervelat for Lord Paisley, "a disciple of Dr. Pepusch". Stanesby's attempt, however, "did not answer expectation: by reason of its closeness, the interior parts imbibed and retained the moisture of the breath, the ducts dilated, and broke. In short, the whole blew up".

Stanesby Junior and Lewis Merci, a celebrated recorder-player, are credited by Hawkins with the invention, *circa* 1732, of a system whereby the use of a recorder a fifth above concert pitch avoided the necessity of transposition, "for a flute of this size . . . became an octave to the violin". The steadily increasing popularity of the German, or transverse flute at that time, however, denied to Stanesby the reward which his ingenuity might otherwise have afforded him.

The trade card of Stanesby Junior (in Sir Ambrose Heal's Collection) is finely engraved and concludes with a note:—

"Sold as above (in the Temple Exchange, Fleet Street), and nowhere else.

N.B. Whereas Instruments are sold, about the Town, pretended to be made by Persons who have work'd under my Father or Me, which is an Imposition on the Publick, for my Father or Self never taught or employ'd any other Person in the finishing part of any Instrument whatsoever.

STANESBY
The Mark JUNIOR on my Work."

George Astor, though less successful than his younger brother, John Jacob, founded a business which made many wind instruments in the closing years of the eighteenth century. Coming from Germany to London about 1778, George Astor worked with a flute-maker and set up in business with his brother John until the latter's departure for America in 1783. From Wych Street, Drury Lane, George Astor removed about 1798 to 79 Cornhill and also had

⁷ Kindly communicated by Mrs. Emmison, M.A., Chelmsford.

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Stanesby Jun^r

In the Temple Exchange Fleet Street,
LONDON.

Makes, to the greatest Perfection,
all sorts of

Wind Musical Instruments

*In Ivory or fine Wood, Plain, after a very neat manner,
or curiously Adorned with Gold, Silver, Ivory, &c. next
way to preserve them, approved and recommended by the
best Masters in Europe.*

Sold as above, and no where else.

*I. B. Whereas, Instruments are sold about the Town, prettily
to be made by Persons who have worked under my Father or Me,
which is an Imposition on the Publick, for my Father or self,
never taught, or employ'd any other Person, in the finishing
part of any Instrument whatsoever.*

Brooks's Imp^t

The Mark STANESBY JUN^R on my Mark

Geo. Bickham Jun^r

Trade-card of Thomas Stanesby, junior (1692-1754) from the original in Sir Ambrose Heal's Collection.

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premises at 27 Tottenham Street, Fitzroy Square. The fairly full account of the Astor firm, given in Grove's *Dictionary*, traces the subsequent designations: George Astor & Co.; Astor & Horwood; Astor & Co.; and Gerock Astor & Co. Though flute-making was their early speciality, "Geo. Astor & Co." appears on five-key clarinets, on bassoons with from six to eight keys, and on several trumpets. The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, has a splendid silver E♭ slide-trumpet bearing on the bell the monogram "I.A."—presumably that of Jacob Astor who imported from England instruments for sale in America. George Astor also made pianofortes and published sheet music.

According to an advertisement of 1724, "At the Green Door, in Somerset House Yard, in the Strand" was the address of Peter Bressan who specialized in the making of recorders. Specimens of his work are preserved in many collections—Paris, Berlin, Brunswick, Amsterdam, and The Hague and Bury St. Edmunds—while at Chester, Norwich, and in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, there are comparatively rare bass recorders of Bressan. Sir John Hawkins refers to Bressan as a contemporary of Stanesby Junior, and a brief reference occurs in Kidson's *British Music Publishers*, p. 224.

A specially fine set of four recorders (discant, alto, tenor and bass) by Pui Bressan came to light in 1886 when the collection of antiquities of the Chester Archaeological Society was removed to new quarters. The instruments, now in the Grosvenor Museum, Chester, have been described and illustrated by Welch in his *Six Lectures on the Recorder* (1911); pp. 163-164, by J. Pulver in his *Dictionary of Old English Music*, s.v. Recorder; and by Dr. J. C. Bridge in *Proceedings of the Musical Association*, Session XXVII, 1901.

A recorder in E in the Vienna Collection (No. 166) is stamped Pui Bressan between rosettes. Canon Galpin suggests that this may signify Puine Bressan, "Bressan the younger"—a brother of Peter Bressan. There is no other record of such a maker.

In 1770 Jonathan Fentum was established as a dealer in music and musical instruments at "the Corner of Salisbury Street near Southampton Street in the Strand", and his name, like Richard Potter's, is associated with the flute virtuosi of that time, Tacet and Florio, a Tutor for whose "new invented" six-keyed German Flute he published. A trade card of Jonathan Fentum, in the Banks Collection, gives his addresses as 78 Strand and 4 Adelphi, and a descendant, Henry Fentum, was in business at 78 Strand from c. 1838-1859, during which period he sold flutes, clarinets, keyed bugles and cornets upon all of which he stamped his name.

There is a record of the sale in 1828 of a boxwood flute stamped with the name of (Pietro Grassi) Florio (c. 1730-c. 1795), associated with Tacet in the improvement of the flute. The instrument had seven silver keys and two extra joints. A one-keyed flute by the same maker is in the Castle Museum, York.

Nothing is known of William Gatley, maker of two straight-type tenor oboes, one in the Museum of the Brussels Conservatoire,⁸ the other in

⁸ No. 1979. Mahillon has misread the name as "Gatlem".

Warrington Municipal Museum. He may be regarded as having worked about the middle of the eighteenth century, but not necessarily in London.

George Goulding, in 1784, founded the music-publishing business which he directed for practically fifty years. Starting at 25 James Street, Covent Garden, his address c. 1787 was "The Haydn's Head", 6 James Street, with secondary premises first at 17 Great Turnstile and later at 113 Bishopsgate Street. In 1799 Goulding assumed several partners and removed to 45 Pall Mall, an address which appears on many wood-wind instruments bearing one of the stamps: "George Goulding", "Goulding & Co.", "Goulding, Wood & Co.", "Goulding, D'Almaine", "Goulding, D'Almaine, Potter & Co.", and "Goulding & Potter". The later addresses 117 (or 124) New Bond Street and finally 20 Soho Square also occur on the flutes, oboes, clarinets and bassoons of which the firm sold, if it did not make, considerable quantities. It is possible that J. Wood, a clever instrument maker and for a time a partner of Goulding, may have made all the wood-wind sold by the firm. "Wood's Patent" is stamped on the telescopic tuning-slide on the wing of an eleven-keyed Goulding bassoon in the Carse Collection (No. 104); a five-keyed B \flat clarinet in the Bate Collection is stamped both "Goulding & Co." and "J. Wood"; and a six-keyed bassoon in Mr. T. K. Dibley's Collection is stamped "Goulding & Co.", and, at the bottom of the butt, "J. Wood, fecit".

Little is known of John Hale, 20 Chandos Street, a flute-maker from c. 1784-1800. Four of his flutes with up to six keys are known, and he is mentioned by Cornelius Ward in *The Flute Explained* (London, 1844).

Circa 1780 was the date ascribed by the late Dr. Dayton Miller to a flute, No. 1044, in his large collection, now in the Library of Congress, Washington, bearing the stamp Benjamin Hallett, London. Nothing is known about this maker.

Very little, too, is known concerning Kusder who includes oboes (two-three keyed) and bassoons (five-keyed) and flutes among his products. Kusder of London and Tromlitz of Leipzig are mentioned by Dr. Ribock as the earliest makers of the six-keyed flute, not more than twenty years before the publication in 1782 of his *Bemerkungen über die Flöte*. Lavoix in his *Histoire de l'Instrumentation* (1878) credits Kusder with having invented c. 1762 the conoidal contraction of the lower part of the bore, but gives no authority for this assertion. Mahillon, too, in the first volume of his Brussels Conservatoire Museum Catalogue credits Kusder with the invention of the F \sharp key in 1762. Both these assertions are discredited by Rockstro in *The Flute*, who considers them to be due to misreadings of Ribock. Unfortunately, Kusder is not mentioned by any eighteenth century author except Ribock. A two-keyed oboe and a five-keyed bassoon by Kusder were lent by Canon Galpin at the Royal Military Exhibition, 1890, and are now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the recent elaborate Catalogue of which, by Bessaraboff, contains a minute description. The Dayton Miller Collection also contains two Kusder flutes, and the Carse Collection a fine oboe on which Kusder's stamp is placed over a double-headed eagle. Altogether about eight of his instruments survive.

"At the sign of the Harp and Crown, 26 Cheapside, was the address at which James Longman founded his business, *c.* 1767. For over sixty years during which the firm underwent many changes, it published a wide range of musical productions and made quantities of keyboard instruments as well as pipes and tabors, flutes and oboes (two-keyed). Longman & Lukey (1771-1777) were joined in 1778 by Francis Broderip, and, when a year later Lukey went out of the firm, Longman & Broderip continued for twenty years, at the original address, and, after 1785, also at 13 Haymarket. The stamp of Longman & Broderip is that most commonly found upon the firm's wind instruments, but one cannot be certain that all were necessarily of their own manufacture.

Muzio Clementi (1752-1832) must be included in this summary of eighteenth century makers as he joined John Longman about 1798 at 26 Cheapside. The large number of instruments bearing Clementi's name—usually Clementi & Co.—include flutes (six-eight keys), clarinets (five-thirteen keys), bassoons (eight keys), and keyed bugles (six-nine keys).

The name of Metzler has been well-known for over 150 years. The founder, Valentine Metzler, came from Bingen in Germany in 1790 and opened a music warehouse at 105 Wardour Street, Soho, with a workshop for brass repairs. A great many instruments, both wood-wind and brass, bear the Metzler stamp, but the majority are doubtless nineteenth century products of the firm which became Metzler & Son, *c.* 1816. George Richard Metzler (1797-1867) joined his father in 1816 and commenced music publishing, removing in 1842 to premises in Great Marlborough Street, Soho. He was succeeded by his son, George Thomas Metzler (1835-1879), a piano-maker. In 1867 Frank Chappell became a partner, till his death in 1886, and the business became a limited liability company in 1893, and no longer makes wood-wind or brass.

Milhouse of Newark and London appear to have been among the busiest makers of wood-wind for over half a century from about 1760. Until 1789 W. Milhouse worked at Newark making flutes, oboes (two-keyed) and bassoons (four-six keyed). He removed to 337 Oxford Street, London, and issued a trade card which is preserved in the Banks Collection. Of forty-six of his instruments noted in collections, no fewer than twenty-seven are bassoons with from four to ten keys, and it would seem that Milhouse supplied quite a number of bassoons for church use, *e.g.* six-keyed in Yateley Church, Hants., eight-keyed in West Tarring Church, Sussex., four-keyed in Balsham Church, Cambs., etc.

The Brussels Collection includes an oboe with three silver keys (No. 964) and stamped "C. Miller" above a unicorn's head. Possibly this is a misreading for "G. Miller", a London maker about whom little or nothing is known. He appears to have worked about 1780, judging by a pair of clarinets with his stamp at Hardwicke Court, and another five-keyed clarinet in the Bate Collection. A flute in the Dayton Miller Collection bears the same name, but as Dr. Miller attributed it to the period *c.* 1815, it must be by a subsequent maker of the name.

Tebaldo Monzani, born at Modena in 1762, came to London about 1788 and achieved considerable renown both as a flute-player in the King's Theatre,

etc., and as a maker. In 1790 his premises were at 1 Duke Street, Grosvenor Square: by 1799 he was at 2 Pall Mall, and after 1808 he was in partnership with Hill at various addresses. In 1812 Monzani took out in his own name a patent for "improvements on clarinets and German flutes". *The Musical World* records his death at Margate in 1839, aged 77. Flutes of his making with as many as eight keys occur in several collections and clarinets with eleven and twelve keys.

"Norman, London" is the stamp on a two-keyed oboe exhibited at the Royal Military Exhibition, 1890. It seems possible that this is the stamp (if not the make) of Barak Norman (1688-1740), a skilled viol and violoncello maker, who after 1715 was in partnership with Nathaniel Cross at the sign of the Bass Viol in St. Paul's Churchyard.

Parker, of Piccadilly, London, seems to have confined himself to the making of piccolos, flutes, flageolets, and bassoons (six- and eight-keyed). He is credited with the invention of the cross-blown flageolet. His dates may be taken as 1770-1830.

D. Peposa may not have been a London maker, but his name appears in association with Bressan, the London recorder-maker, on an instrument at the Vienna Exhibition, 1892. A recorder stamped "D. Peposa" is in the Vienna Collection (No. 164), but no other instrument of his are known.

Percival, London, is the stamp on a cavalry trumpet in F in the Paris Collection (No. 602); and a slide-trumpet similarly stamped was sold at Puttick & Simpson's in 1939. His period may be regarded as c. 1790-1824, in which latter year Pigot's Directory gives "Percival, Thomas, Horn and Trumpet, 89 St. James' Street". In a letter to the *Musical Times* (June, 1925), Mr. Blandford stated that Percival was in great repute as a maker of the small fox-hunting horns, and referred to the fact that when Mr. Jorrocks assumed the mastership of the Handley Cross Hounds, he brought with him a "reg'ler Percival, silver-mouthpiece, deep-cup'd"; and that elsewhere Surtees says "Twang went the Percivals".

Perhaps the best-known flute-makers were the Potter family, whose business was founded c. 1745 by Richard Potter (Potter Senior), (1726-1806), probably at Green Dragon Court, Foster Lane, Cheapside, where he was working in 1757, removing in 1764 to 5 Pemberton Row (then called New Street), near Fleet Street, with additional premises at 5 Johnson's Court, Fleet Street, after 1786. Excellent workmanship characterizes the Potter instruments, many of their flutes being of ivory with silver keys. Potter seems to have made some two-keyed oboes, flageolets, and a natural horn in E \flat (Carse Collection No. 65) is marked "Potter" though it is doubtful if Potter was more than the seller. William Henry Potter (1760-1848) second son of Richard, continued the business after 1808 at 5 Pemberton Row, Gough Square, and the firm underwent many changes in name in the nineteenth century. Among the considerable number of Potter flutes is one dated as early as 1776 (Historical Society Collection, Chicago); another of 1777 (Carse Collection); and a third of 1779 (C. M. Champion Collection). A great deal of research in regard to the Potter family has been carried out by Messrs. C. M. Champion, R. B.

Chatwin and F. G. Rendall, London, and it is hoped that the results may be published.

The name Preston was well-known in London for some sixty years from 1774 when John Preston commenced business at 9 Banbury Court, Long Acre, as an instrument maker. It was in the Strand, however, first at No. 105 (to which he removed in 1776) and later at No. 97 known as Beaufort Buildings, that he issued a trade card (Banks Collection in B.M.—D2/2598). Preston's business became mainly that of music publisher and he issued great quantities of music of all kinds. Thomas Preston, John's son, joined his father c. 1789 and continued after the latter's death c. 1800, at 97 Strand till 1823, and at 71 Dean Street, Soho, till c. 1835. Despite the long existence of the Preston business, the name survives on very few instruments, e.g. a recorder in private hands, a flute in the Dayton Miller Collection, and a six-keyed bassoon (from the Glen Collection) now in the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh.

Proser was another London wood-wind maker in the closing years of the eighteenth century. A four-keyed bassoon by him is in Luton Museum and a five-keyed one, dated 1795, is in Mr. E. Hunt's Collection. One-keyed flutes were also among Proser's products and the Dayton Miller Collection contains one stamped "Proser" and another "Prosser". The latter is probably an example of the attempts often made about that time (and indeed well into the nineteenth century) to trick purchasers into buying an inferior article bearing a reputable trade-name altered only as regards a letter.⁹

Little is known about Schuchart, flute and oboe maker of the mid-eighteenth century—one-keyed ivory flutes and three-keyed oboes are preserved in several collections (the late Percy Bull's Collection, F. G. Rendall Collection, Horniman Museum, London, etc.). Ch. Schuchart worked at "The Two Flutes and Hautboy", Chandois Street, according to Kidson, and Boyd's *London Burials* records:

Schuchart, 1756, Henry G., 1765, Charles, 1790, John, all buried at St. Paul's, Covent Garden.¹⁰

Schuchart Junior is stamped on a one-key boxwood flute in the Nettlefold Collection. A three-keyed boxwood oboe in the Berlin Hochschule Collection (No. 2951) bears the curious stamp "I^oI Schuchart", which Canon Galpin suggests may stand for Johann Josef Schuchart.

Maurice Whitaker is said by Kidson to have commenced business c. 1766 "under the Piazza, near the north gate of the Royal Exchange, opposite Bartholomew Lane, London," from which address he issued *A Complete Tutor for the German Flute*. His name does not, however, appear in any London Directory of that period. Although a six-keyed bassoon stamped Whitaker is known, this maker appears to have specialized in flutes. It is worthy of note that flutes also occur stamped Whitaker & Co. (in business 1820-1830), and in the early 1890's there was in business in London C. Whitaker who specialized in Siccama flutes.

⁹ See an interesting note in this connection in *The Flautist's Magazine* (1827).

¹⁰ Kindly communicated by Mrs. Blomfield, F.R.Hist.S., London.

The name Weller of 23 Oxford Street is associated with that of Anne Bland (established before 1790), with whom he entered into partnership in 1793. Bland and Weller continued until Bland's retiral, c. 1819, after which Weller & Co. occurs for some years. One-keyed flutes and five-keyed clarinets exist, stamped Bland & Weller, but there is reason to think that the firm were dealers rather than makers. They receive mention in Rosamond Harding's *The Pianoforte*.

Such, then, were the wood-wind and brass instrument makers of seventeenth and eighteenth century London. Among them are several whose contribution to the development of instrument making in this country and abroad entitles them to recognition they have not so far received. It is hoped that this short account of them may evoke interest in a branch of musicology strangely neglected in Great Britain, although instrument makers of France and Belgium have been worthily chronicled by Constant Pierre¹¹ and Ernest Closson¹² respectively.

[The author has compiled a card-index and stencilled list of some 2,500 makers of wind-instruments of all ages and all countries, and will be happy to reply to any inquiries on the subject.]

Reviews of Music

Adam Carse. *Romance and Gavotte for String Orchestra*. Full Score. (Augener.) 2s. 6d.

These pieces are the lightest of light music, and I have to confess to being one of those unspeakable snobs who go blue in the face when light music is played. When I say, therefore, that I find the *Romance* excruciatingly romantic and the *Gavotte* rather insignificantly lively, perhaps the judgment may be taken with a pinch of salt. The string writing is smooth, but without much exploitation of colour.

Selections from the original Manuscript of the *Messiah* (Harrow replicas, No. 8). (Heffer.) 21s.

This album contains facsimile reproductions of the Arias "Every Valley", "How beautiful are the feet", "I know that my Redeemer liveth", and the "Hallelujah" chorus. No dabbler could fail to find such a selection interesting, whether from a musical or from an antiquarian point of view. The serious will be intrigued to note which bars have been altered and why, the romantic may mentally reconstruct the urgent scene in Handel's room from the crescendo of blots towards the end of the "Hallelujah" chorus and from the huge scrawled final Hallelujah; others will match the comparative clarity of the handwriting with the serenity of the piece in "I know that my Redeemer liveth". This is certainly a perfect dabbler's book, but it is little more. The rather perfunctory notes at the end by Deutsch and Havergal sound as if they are addressed to the not very knowledgeable amateur, yet no guidance is offered to him on how, for example, to negotiate the soprano, alto and tenor clefs.

N. G. L.

¹¹ *Les Facteurs d'Instruments de Musique* . . . (Paris, 1893).

¹² *La Facture des Instruments de Musique en Belgique* (Bruxelles, 1935).

The Problem of Notation in the Twelve-Tone Technique

BY

WARREN WIRTZ

THE need for a new notation for atonal music has been felt for a long time. A casual glance at a score written in the twelve-tone technique will show how overburdened it is with accidentals. An even more important consideration than the lack of economy of the present notation is that the new music is struggling along with a system of notation which was created for completely different musical aims, and is consequently physically and psychologically shackled. In view of these circumstances, it is the belief of the writer that a new system should be created. Such a system should be conceived with two major objectives in mind: first, the freeing of new music from the tonal connotations and functions of accidentals, and second, simplification.¹

Let us look briefly at the history of chromatic alterations. They were first introduced as *musica ficta* to compensate for inequalities of step and half-step within the hexachord. Since the forbidden tritone, in spite of theoreticians, would insist on cropping up again and again, new accidentals had to be added. By the sixteenth century all alterations were known and used by secular composers. These alterations, operating in cadences (thus developing leading-tone feeling), and correcting the tritone, caused the ecclesiastical modes to lose their identity more and more. Finally, we are left with the diatonic major and minor scales, and tonality has come into being. With the advent of tonality alterations take on a new meaning.

In tonality alterations must be thought of in relationship to the intricate associations among scale steps and their triads whose functions can under no circumstances be violated, except for an occasional and daring modulation to a close key. We find at first that tonal writers did not feel the need for much alteration, being content with their new-found tonic, dominant, subdominant and other tonal relationships. But quickly, composers, needing new materials (and not realizing the possible results of their folly), began to devise ways of disguising these functions. Hence there developed a gala array of altered chords which for these composers preserved the resolutions of the same chords unaltered. Once well-tempered tuning had been adopted, it did not take long to discover that certain of these altered chords could be treated enharmonically, and here is the beginning of the end of tonality. For soon by this method the

¹ In 1925 in the *Musikblätter des Anbruch*, Arnold Schönberg advanced a system of twelve-tone notation. Introducing oblique and dotted lines, multiple clefs, and coupling of staves in many combinations, it has undoubtedly never been adopted because of its extreme difficulty. In an article published in the same periodical in 1926, Ernst Toch proposed representing the black keys by the sign X at the present location of sharps. Though his solution of the problem is much simpler than Schönberg's, its great disadvantage lies in the fact that his sign which in reality is a theoretical simplification, is in practice more difficult for the eye to grasp than the sharps and flats now in use.

key centre of tonality is changed so frequently that no one key is home base. Free atonality has come into being.

In the midst of the chromatic chaos of the early years of this century, Arnold Schönberg created the twelve-tone series and the beginnings of its technique. Whatever may be the final result of this technique, its immediate significance lies in the fact that it administered the death blow to tonality. Since Schönberg's series has to do with the predetermined intervallic relationships between members rather than with tone and half-tone scale formations which ideally must be preserved, chromatic alterations in twelve-tone music are meaningless. Yet the use of sharps and flats has been continued, and as Ernst Křenek points out in *Studies in Counterpoint*,² their use is arbitrary. Even in the event that these alterations so charged with tonal and pre-tonal meaning do no violence to the new philosophy of composition, some action must eventually be taken to work out a solution of the problem of notating strict atonal music according to its own aims and exigencies.

The practical problem in the working out of a solution is this: how can we discard alterations, which are intrinsically non-functional, and still represent the twelve tones of the octave at their true pitches?

Here is a possible solution:

Ex. I

Ex. II

Explanations:

Example I.

1. The white notes on the keyboard are shown as round notes; black notes are triangular in shape. For the latter an equilateral triangle is used.
2. The twelve tones of the octave are numbered from one to twelve.
3. Numbering of the twelve *descends* chromatically from C to D \flat . The numbers are the same for all octaves. Descending white notes are, in order, 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11
(C, B, A, G, F, E, D).

Descending black notes are, in order, 3, 5, 7, 10, 12
(B \flat , A \flat , G \flat , E \flat , D \flat)

² G. Schirmer, Inc., 1940.

Example II.

1. As shown in example II, the new distinction of shape is applied to all note values.
2. A stem is attached to a triangular note at the bisector of one side (of the base if the stem goes down), instead of at the vertex of the triangle. In this manner the stem and note form the shaft and head of an arrow.
3. For the double whole note, or breve, two triangles are placed together as shown. The same value on a white note is shown in the conventional manner.
4. When a triangular note shares a stem with another note, round or triangular, the stem is coincident with a side of the triangle.

B \flat will now be called "3" and invariably recognized as a triangular note on the third line of the G clef, the second line of the F clef, etc. By the same token, the names A, B, C, D, etc., with their accompanying single and double sharps and flats are dropped. This latter result was the first of our two objectives in devising a new manner of notating atonal music, for as we lose sharps and flats we thereby lose the tonal connotations of these signs. And, because of the unmistakable identity of the new notes, we lose, by actual count (as will be shown later), a formidable total of initial signs which now must be used to clarify a sound on a given line or space as well as of those which must now be used to cancel unwanted sounds on a given line or space which have occurred previously in a measure. Our second objective of trying to represent the keyboard on the great staff more economically than can now be done is thus realized.

Of the two possibilities of ascension and descent of numbering, the latter has been chosen for the reason that it is commonly considered more natural to think in terms of flats than of sharps and that more repose is consequently experienced in flats. Whatever may be the explanation of this phenomenon, a descending numbering has been chosen since ascending numbering would have associated triangular notes with sharps. We associate, for example, the tone one whole step below C much more strongly with the name B \flat than with the name A \sharp , and, similarly, we locate this black note of the keyboard more readily on the middle line of the G clef than on the second space from the bottom. Since this natural tendency simplifies the mastery of the new notation, it has been adopted.

Example III shows the five theoretically possible alterations on each of the seven diatonic scale steps.³

In Example IV these thirty-five alterations, which are different ways of "spelling" the twelve tones of the octave, have been distributed according to their pitch and placed above the new notes which represent those pitches. The three ways of writing each of these pitches (except for 5, which has only

³ Though theoretically all double sharps and flats can be considered to exist, it would undoubtedly be difficult to find many, if any, examples of the use of B double sharp, A double sharp, G double flat, F double flat, and E double sharp. If some of these can be found at all, they are more than rare.

two, A \flat and G \sharp) are thus telescoped into one constant symbol with no variable factor.

Ex. III



Ex. IV



For the twelve tones of the octave, we have reduced the number of ways of representing these sounds from thirty-five to twelve, that is, to the actual number of sounds. Since as we lose the accidentals we also drop the present names and change them to numbers from one to twelve, as pointed out above, we have reduced names as well from the thirty-five present ones to twelve. In the actual writing, moreover, if we consider each note and each accidental a unit (a double flat constituting two units), it is the difference between forty-two accidentals plus thirty-five notes, and twelve notes, that is, 77: 12.

Examples V and VI will serve to show the difference between the present notation of atonal music (A) and the projected notation (B).

Ex. V

(A) Tempo I^o



(B) Tempo I^o



Suite for Violoncello Solo *
Ernst Krenek, Op. 84. V.
meas. 18-22

In Example V, the fifteen accidentals which are used in A are eliminated in B. In four and a half measures, an average of over three accidentals is saved for each measure of common time.

In Example VI twenty-one accidentals are used in A. In five and a half measures there is a saving in B of nearly four accidentals for each measure of three-eighths.

Ex. VI

Twelve Short Piano Pieces
Ernst Krenek, Op. 83, #1
meas. 1-5

(A) Allegretto moderato $\text{♩} = 120$ **(B) Allegretto moderato** $\text{♩} = 120$

Ibidem



Examples VII, VIII, and IX are further illustrations of the application of the new notation.

Example VII eliminates forty-nine accidentals in five measures, or approximately ten for each measure of common time; Example VIII, sixty-eight in five measures, or approximately fourteen for each measure of common time; and Example IX, sixty-five in two measures, or thirty-two and a half for each measure of six-four.

Ex. VII

① Allegro molto, energico $\text{♩} = 152$

Fourth String Quartet,
A. Schoenberg, Op. 37*
First Movt., meas. 1-6

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

'Cello

② Allegro molto, energico $\text{♩} = 152$

Ibidem

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

'Cello

Ex. VIII

Fourth String Quartet,
A. Schoenberg, Op. 37
First Movt., meas. 280-88

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

'Cello

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

'Cello

Ex. IX

From the Opera "Lulu," by Alban Berg*
Act II, Sc. I.

(A) Kavatine J. es

p

LOLU
Könn - test Du Dich für heu - te nach - mit-tags nicht frei - ma - chen?

Fl. Viol.

PIANO
Klav.
Vic.

(B) Kavatine J. es

p

LOLU
Könn - test Du Dich für heu - te nach - mit-tags nicht frei - ma - chen?

Fl. Viol.

PIANO
Klav.
Vic.

In the two examples from his fourth string quartet, as throughout this entire piece, Schönberg has pushed the question of chromatic alterations in the twelve-tone technique to its logical conclusion. He has identified every note by its proper sharp, flat, or natural, even when the situation is unequivocal (as the first note of Example VII, or the D and F, First Violin, meas. 280, Example VIII). In this manner, the composer is absolved from the responsibility of the difficult checking for horizontal, vertical and oblique contradictions of tones and uses a method which effectually is the only adequate and simple one in present notation.

It might be asked, however, if all the symbols of expression, which are clearly explained at the beginning of the quartet, are necessary. Example VII has by count more expression symbols than accidentals. Under this additional burden, Schönberg seems to have relied more on the performer's imagination toward the end of the first movement, as can be seen in Example VIII, in which only one measure bears any indication of expression.

Arguments against the new notation:

- (1) The distinction between round and triangular notes will be difficult to execute and see in manuscript.
- (2) Musicians who do not think in terms of the keyboard will find the system difficult.
- (3) The system is new. It will involve changes in printing and the acquiring of a new reading skill. Adding further to the newness of twelve-tone music may cause it to be considered even more esoteric than it is at present.

* Universal-Edition, 1936.

Arguments for the new notation:

- (1) Because a given sound is always notated in the same way, and accidentals are not needed, a 100% economy has been realized in accidentals for the composer's hand, the printer's ink, and the reader's eye. This is possible because the new notes now include the meaning that was formerly conveyed by both accidental and note. If we use the unit standard as applied to Ex. IV, which gives the ratio 77:12, we achieve an actual overall economy for possible symbols to notate the twelve tones of the octave of approximately 84%.
- (2) As has been pointed out, the thirty-five possible names of the diatonic steps have been simplified to twelve number names for the pitches they represent. A gain of approximately 66½% for note names is thus represented.
- (3) No fundamental change in notation has taken place. The great staff is unchanged. Note values remain the same, though notes of all values undergo the mutation of shape as explained above.
- (4) The new system, since it takes away the associations of tonal tendencies in which sharps and double sharps ascend and flats and double flats descend *stepwise*, is in agreement with the premises of strict atonal writing and offers a new freedom for uninhibited thinking in the new idiom.

The present plan which I have offered is one of a number possible within the general frame, though of all possibilities it seems to be the most practicable. In printing, for example, the black notes of the keyboard might be distinguished from the white by means of colour instead of shape. In view of the fact that printing in colour means a separate pressing for each colour, this method would seem impractical. And even if printing adopted the use of colour, the composer would probably find it tedious thus to differentiate. Whatever method is chosen, it is desirable that the same symbols be used for both manuscript and printing to avoid confusion.

Another possibility which offers itself is the use of different sizes for black and white notes. The eye, however, probably grasps the difference between shapes more easily than between sizes, particularly if the difference is slight as it necessarily would be within the distance of a space of the staff, or a line, whose limits are actually those of a space.

Though this new method is designed primarily for use in strict atonal music, it obviously can also serve free atonal music, which retains certain tonal materials (triads, scale passages, etc.), but still cannot be adequately served by conventional notation. The need for simplification of notation for such music is very real.

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H. P. Allen

BY

A. E. F. DICKINSON

ON 20th February, 1946, the trumpets sounded on the other side for one of the greatest musicians of our generation. As an organist in posts of distinction and as doctor of music at the age of twenty, H. P. Allen soon showed remarkable musical qualities, but it was as a choral conductor that he built a tradition that soon became legendary and may now be deemed historical.

At Oxford, in particular, he inaugurated an epoch of dynamic music-making, unpolished perhaps, but contriving by its emphasis of essentials to strike home to performers and audiences alike. A new class of amateur, previously non-musical or at least woolly-eared, found in music something into which they could pour some of their best energy of mind and body. Those who became educational directors later could not now ignore music as a recreational activity, or as a subject of serious study. Musical enthusiasts who came into the Allen circle found their experience stretched to the utmost and steadied by judicious interpretations. Men and women of all sorts came back from the war of 1914-18 to sharpen their minds against the challenge (in astonishingly quick succession) of the *Sea Symphony*, the *Masses* in B minor and D, and *The Dream of Gerontius*.

For in the fight for better, and (in the artistic sense) bigger music (a fight in which all concerned learnt sooner or later to appreciate the wit and candour of his criticisms of human weaknesses) Allen rarely failed to produce a worthy cause. The first and final cause was the art of J. S. Bach, whose vital rhythms and sturdy reflectiveness he made it his concern to call into the common consciousness on a scale not essayed before. Beginning with "Jesu, joy of man's desiring" and the cantatas, he was in a good position to match the comprehensiveness of the B minor Mass, which he was invited to conduct with other works, at Leeds in 1913. His aim was high and his interpretative vision of a rare penetration. But while the exacting musicianship of Bach made a good prelude and coda to adventure, Allen did not, of course, stop at Bach. He was an exponent of Schütz, and he was one of the first to give the *Sea Symphony* after the Leeds première. His repertoire was an invitation to an advanced educational fellowship which an immense company will always remember with respect and gratitude. As a conductor his discernment in the matter of *tempi* was remarkable.

This truly exemplary devotion to the art of music, in which personal *kudos* was palpably a by-product, earned Allen an exceptional sway over the musical life of many communities which accepted and sought his judgment in matters of policy and appointment. As successor in 1918 to Parry at the Royal College of Music, he introduced many new educational personalities—some, like Vaughan Williams, under modest protest—and he reorganised the general curriculum on more definite lines than a vague liberalism. Opera found a new home, and even concert-singers gained an enhanced respect for the art through paper-work and a widening musical environment.

Our last thoughts, however, must be of Allen as a man, not too active to be capable of human sympathy, and yet working from year to year from a profound conviction of purpose; a conviction which thousands were happy to share or to divine and will now treasure as the quality that in the most "atomic" world makes life worth living.

Book Reviews

Music of Latin America. By Nicolas Slonimsky. Pp. viii + 374. (Crowell. New York.) 1945. \$3.50.

This book falls far short of what its publisher and author claim it to be—a complete account and dictionary of Latin American music. A lack of preliminary study is evident throughout. For want of depth and background the writer is unable to relate one fact to another in the dictionary and presents his potted biographies with a flatness and absence of chiaroscuro which robs them of individual character and accumulative interest. Mr. Slonimsky has previously written a book on *Music since 1900*. This, perhaps, explains a fading away of his interest in musical history as it recedes from that year. Of the twenty republics Brazil is not only by far the largest, but has had, perhaps, the most interesting musical past in colonial times. Yet the author took only a "long shot at the language" and seemed to think his most urgent task was to run round to the registry offices to find out the exact ages of musicians whose hospitality he had just enjoyed; and he reminds us more than once that these records differ from what he had been told. This is "vital chronology", apparently. But though this particular line of enquiry is commonly supposed to be a womanly affair, I, for one, found the author's geniality—elsewhere agreeably droll—wearing thin, hereabouts.

He took home a quarter of a ton of musical scores. South Americans were not always forthcoming with the material, however. Some had previously sent manuscripts to the States—as requested—but received neither acknowledgement, performance, printing nor fee. Others merely showed traditional Hispanic indifference to what Boston or Washington might think of them, being engrossed in constructing a culture in their own way, and in their own time, this being longer than the short-term, one-man span conception of their northern neighbours, and sensibly trying not to be too self-conscious of this gestatory period, in spite of district visitor's questionnaires such as Mr. Slonimsky's "What is your harmonic style like?" to which the answer was what he should have expected; "What I can find on my instrument, señor". Villa-Lobos spoke for most of them when he exclaimed "I am folk lore" in reply to another question from the prepared list. Flying around the southern hemisphere with acquisitive intent—we know now why all God's American children got wings at this stage of their development—the author candidly reports the opinion of a Mexican critic that about eighty per cent. of his spoils were *basura*—from the garbage-pail. Mr. Slonimsky didn't allow that to deter him, however.

Seriously, a competent dictionary of South American music would be welcome. There are plenty of native writers who could fill this need admirably, if they would put their heads together. We should then get information more satisfying than that these songs and dances are in three-four or two-four time—aren't they nearly all? The differing melodic patterns would be presented—simple alphabetical formulae would serve in most cases: the harmonic progressions expressed according to group, migratory and cadential; and dates and places of earliest references would be essential. There is abundant material available to make this a reasonably easy task, given time and interest. From the drawing together of these multitudinous elements which is taking place before our eyes and ears we should be able to form some fair ideas of what South American music is going to offer; it is one of the most fascinating speculations imaginable. But by treating his subject in a vacuum, Mr. Slonimsky unfortunately deprives his readers of any understanding of its deep and far-reaching roots from which are spreading so profuse and varied a flowering. To give but a few examples, there is no mention of the *machete's* early use as a descant instrument, none of the Portuguese form of *chocalho*, *buzinha*, *cascaveles* as compared with the American—yet they were in lively existence in Camoes' youth; though it is fashionable just now to label percussive effects as Afro-Brazilian, the instruments of the jungly Brazilian village bands quoted by the author are similar to those taking part in Portuguese rustic merrymakings at the time when early colonizers were sailing the Atlantic; the *nau catarineta* pageant descends from a Portuguese romance ballad, and this

is its musicological significance. The origin of the *zapateo* throws light on an entire musical culture, but though this could be told in a sentence, it is not so much as mentioned except as a tap dance. And so on. Considering the vast range of the theme no person of sense would start to compile a list of examples omitted; I would just like to make one observation on this aspect, however; had the author been aware that the knife-grinder's tune he gives is to be heard in the streets of Castilian towns, he might then have found space to put in its stead a truly rare, and perhaps indigenous trophy—if anything in music can be indigenous—such as the *Nicaraguan Death Shadow* chant; he doesn't mention it, though.

The past of South American music enables us to foretell something of its future. Obviously, Brazil is going to make a rich contribution of her own some day. The old Lusitanian exuberant *fantasia* is already breaking out in conditions not unlike those of earlier times in Europe, though without the check of earlier obstacles; Andrade and Villalobos display unmistakably the Portuguese love of ingenious theory expressed with ancestral vehemence and rhetorical colour. Although from over the border, in Argentina, the corrective of *agri-dulce* Spanish taste may now play but a sub-dominant part—once in Europe its influence over the Portuguese was both tonic and dominant—signs are not wanting that its old centrifugal attraction will still exert an influence over other Spanish-speaking, and Spanish-singing, republics.

These Inter-American drives sponsored officially—at enormous cost—by the United States are producing some unexpected repercussions. One of these, of interest to us, is the awakening regard of Canadians and South Americans for one another as they glance across Uncle Sam's broad shoulders. South American musicians are finding their way in increasing numbers to Canada and taking their music with them. Surveying the present and future of Spanish and Portuguese music in the New World, it is not unnatural to wish that English music may yet find a more secure foothold for itself in a sphere where language and climate offer conditions scarcely less favourable for its expansion and growth than South American has provided for the Latin races. Canada is forming a way of living all her own, more swiftly than many of us realize, and the chances of English music taking part in this are not so numerous now as they were until recently. Our common language, nevertheless, still gives our music the natural right to follow it and that passage of music across the southern Atlantic waters still holds both a lesson and a promise for us in northern latitudes.

A. L.

Arnold Schönberg: an appreciative monograph. By Egon Wellesz. Pp. 12. (Counterpoint Publications.) 1s. 6d.

This pamphlet will disappoint anyone who buys it in the expectation of reading a sequel to Dr. Wellesz's well-known and admirable book on Schönberg. (Such a sequel, dealing with the last twenty-five years, would be very welcome, for the book records Schönberg's progress only to the threshold of twelve-tone composition.) However, as a brief, simple, yet authoritative introduction to Schönberg's work and aesthetic in general it should be useful to the uninformed reader. It will tell him something about Schönberg as a man and as a teacher, about the stages of his artistic development, about twelve-tone technique. But the whole thing has rather the air of a *pièce d'occasion*, a belated seventieth-birthday greeting; one expects something more substantial from a scholar of the rank of Dr. Wellesz.

G. A.

Gabriel Fauré. By Charles Koechlin. Translated by Leslie Orrey. Pp. viii + 98. (Dobson.) 1945. 7s. 6d.

As a nation we have our musical shortcomings, but chauvinism is not one of them. England has always welcomed foreign music irrespective of its origin, thereby setting an example that many European countries might well follow. Yet there remains a residue of composers who have yet to establish themselves firmly on this side of the Channel. Our musical public as a whole does not seem to take kindly to the histrionics of Berlioz, while the symphonies of Mahler and Bruckner (when they are heard) leave an impression

of an expanse of matter in a waste of sound. But it is surely strange that Gabriel Fauré should still be comparatively unknown to us. For here is a composer who unites in himself all that is best in French music; clarity and grace, formal perfection and harmonic subtlety, and who had besides the power of writing warm, long-breathed melodies, a gift not conspicuously displayed by many of his far better known contemporaries. Yet while we are fairly familiar with Debussy and Ravel we know little of the output of Fauré, whose last opus was numbered 123, and who appears to occupy much the same position in France as Elgar does over here. Apart from a handful of songs, the *Elégie* for cello, the first violin Sonata, together with the *Requiem*, the *Ballade* for piano and orchestra and the *Pelléas and Mélisande* Suite, we hear practically nothing of his music. One hopes that this monograph may do something to stimulate fresh interest in Fauré over here, where he has yet to receive his due.

The author devotes only a few pages to Fauré's life, which seems to have been uneventful, and divided between creative work and teaching. (In the latter capacity he appears to have been as gifted as he was as a composer, seeing that among his pupils can be counted Ravel, Ducasse, Ladmirault, Nadia Boulanger, Florent Schmitt and Koechlin himself, not to mention other hardly less distinguished names.) The remaining chapters are given up to a discussion of the songs and piano pieces, the chamber music, and the larger works for orchestra and chorus, and for orchestra alone, with a final essay on "The Man and his Style". Koechlin writes throughout as a devoted admirer and disciple of the composer, and if his enthusiasm appears at times to be a little uncritical this may well be due to the fact that he believes Fauré to be underestimated in France even now. The main (though possibly unavoidable) defect of the book is the lack of musical examples, of which there are only six in all, and these taken exclusively from the songs. It is notoriously difficult to describe music in words, and altogether impossible to form any adequate idea of a composition by means of verbal description alone. Hence, there is a certain monotony in the author's examination of one work after another; a whole gallery of adjectives is ransacked in an endeavour to give the reader an impression of what a more generous allowance of music type would have achieved far more vividly. Moreover, Koechlin's rather flowery style has been rendered into a kind of Gallicised English which is at times uncomfortable and awkward. Granted the pitfalls of translation one cannot help feeling that Mr. Orrey might have reconsidered sentences such as these: "... there is a risk of appearing less admiring with regard to the last movements"; or "... with a persistent suppleness they (Fauré's musical influences) were turned in the direction of his own domain, enriched by passing detours". Nevertheless, the appearance of this book is welcome and timely, and if some of our conductors and concert artists profit by it we may see our programmes adorned by the inclusion of more and more works by this *grand seigneur* of French music.

C. W. O.

Rimsky-Korsakov—A Short Biography. By Gerald Abraham. Pp. 142. (Duckworth.) 1945. 5s.

Mr. Abraham's short biography is as entertaining as it is informative. I would especially recommend it to those members of our new large musical public who know Korsakov only by *Scheherazade* and the *Spanish Capriccio*. The author rightly stresses that the Korsakov who really matters is the opera composer. At this time, when British opera is at last receiving support and encouragement, and when international opera is again promised to us, is it too much to hope that Russian opera may be staged in this country on the scale it demands?

Mr. Abraham has avoided the worst pitfalls of the short biography—to make it as factual as a textbook, or so vague and sketchy as to be irritating. Here is not only a complete list and history of Korsakov's works but a fascinating study of the man, written with humour and understanding.

G. B.

Gustav Mahler: Memories and Letters. By Alma Mahler. Translated by Basil Creighton. Pp. viii + 234. (John Murray.) 1946. 18s.

Two types of reader will want to get hold of this book: those with a taste for the scurrilous, and those who are interested in Mahler but unable to read German. The former will be delighted, the latter not. The selection of the letters is meagre, but they provide the principal interest of the volume. Mr. Creighton may have a great aptitude for writing English prose, but if he has this very obvious "translation from the German" does not show it.

Alma Mahler's narrative tells us more about herself than about Gustav, and almost as much about Pauline Strauss. To those who already know something of the background this book will do no harm, but it certainly cannot be recommended as an introductory character study of the man Mahler for those of the British public who at present know nothing about him. We should add that the translation is not complete.

British Music of our Time. Edited by A. L. Bacharach. Pp. 256. (Penguin Books, Ltd.) 1946.

This is magnificent value. Dealing with Delius, Holst, Heseltine, Bridge, Vaughan Williams, Ireland, Bax, Goossens, Walton, Bliss, Berners, Lambert, Moeran, Rubbra, Britten and a handful of minor figures in essays contributed by Scott Goddard, Ralph Hill, Gerald Abraham, Hubert Foss, J. A. Westrup, Julian Herbage, Robin Hull, Colin Mason, Alec Robertson, Edward Lockspeiser and Arthur Hutchings, it represents a triumph of collation on the part of the editor which should be read by everyone with any pretensions to an interest in modern English music.

Mr. Hutchings alone credits his reader with enough erudition to enable him to master the difficulties of illustrations in music-type, and largely for this reason (though not entirely) his essay stands out a mile as the most stimulating. Rubbra, on whom Mr. Hutchings writes, is not yet recognized as the outstanding figure in contemporary music which he will undoubtedly become. (None of his orchestral works are recorded except the transcription of the *Brahms-Handel Variations*—released, oddly enough, only in the United States!) But a careful study of the scores of the third and fourth Symphonies may convince unbelievers that our prophesy is far from rash.

The editor says that the list of extant gramophone records in the appendix is lamentably short. In point of fact it isn't complete (such lists never are), though some of those we miss are probably no longer extant. We have to remember that the Gramophone Companies (both of them) are in the business not for their health but on a commercial basis. That they even so find it possible to issue records which they know perfectly well will not find a popular market is a matter for our gratitude which this seems an appropriate moment to express. Readers of THE MUSIC REVIEW know that the past six years have seen the issue of many records of contemporary British music; whether much of it could have survived free competition in an open European market is not for us to say. But the record-buying public will only have itself to blame if these works are eventually withdrawn from the catalogue for lack of support.

We hope this book will have an enthusiastic welcome from a large public: though we are sceptical whether modern music, either of British or any other origin, will ever appeal to more than a tiny minority.

G. N. S.

NEW LIGHT ON MOZART'S PIANOFORTE CONCERTOS

Mozart. Sa Vie Musicale et Son Oeuvre. Vol. IV. By G. de Saint-Foix. Pp. 399. (Desclée de Brouwer et Cie.) 1939; and *Mozart et Ses Concertos pour Piano.* By C. M. Girdlestone. Pp. 534. (Librairie Fischbacher, Paris.) 1939.

Mozart's twenty-three piano concertos have, until lately, been the declared step-children of posterity. No other part of Mozart's lifework has had to suffer so cruelly from public misunderstanding and from the violent change of fashion and taste that characterized the later Victorian epoch. The last personality to approach their problem

in a creative mood and endowed with the conviction of his own pianistic style was Hummel, who, at an early age, had been Mozart's pupil. Adorned with Hummel's florid cadenzas and embellished with his bold and facile ornamentations and interpretations of obviously sketchy passages in Mozart's manuscript, these concertos presented themselves more and more awkwardly to generations completely out of touch with Mozartian tradition. By 1905 they had fallen into such disfavour and neglect that even W. Schering (in his early and comprehensive study *Geschichte des Instrumentalkonzerts*, Leipzig, 1905) dared to fob his readers off with less than three pages in which these concertos are blandly characterized as "Unterhaltungsmusik" and even worse still as "harmlose Gesellschaftsmusik" (music of light social entertainment). But even 20 years later, when Mozart and his world had—thanks to Gustav Mahler and his Mozart Renaissance—once more become a living reality, the eminent scholar Hermann Abert devotes a single summarizing chapter to the piano concertos, full of interesting detail and already alive to the host of interpretative problems with which these scores are bristling, but still presenting these works as a lower and more perishable stratum of Mozart's musical realm. In his *Rokoko und Klassik* (Potsdam, 1931) Ernst Bücken shows for the first time among German musicologists that a change of attitude with regard to the general assessment of these works is close at hand. But the penetrating Mozart student had to consider Abert's and Bücken's contributions as an emergency solution and was constantly on the lookout for a more comprehensive analysis of these masterpieces, in which the symphonist and the pianoforte virtuoso establish a unique creative balance never again attained. In the meantime the excellent gramophone recordings of some of these concertos with Artur Schnabel as soloist, the deeply penetrating analytical studies of some of them by D. F. Tovey, and the practical revisions of 6 of the most famous by F. Blume,¹ paved the way for a much wider appreciation of Mozart's unique effort in the field of the "symphonic dialogue" for piano and orchestra. Tovey's masterly essay "The Classical Concerto", as well as F. Blume's study on "Die formengeschichtliche Stellung der Klavier Konzert Mozarts" (Mozart Jahrbuch II, 1924), had revealed the important historic position of these works and their importance in the development of concerto form.

The increasing popularity of recent recordings of these concertos and their belated reinstatement in the repertory of modern pianists urgently require a complete analytical study which is in fact a long overdue necessity. The deficiency of earlier Mozart biographies in this respect has at long last been made good by two comparatively recent French studies, both published late in 1939, i.e. shortly after the outbreak of war.

Mr. Girdlestone's weighty book deserves closest attention as being the first special study entirely devoted to a close analysis of the concertos. In five big sections he deals with the bulk of the matter, allotting very properly two introductory chapters and a summarizing epilogue to a lucid explanation of Mozart's formal structure in its historic perspective and referring to the peculiar relationship between soloist and orchestra prevailing in it. The early Salzburg concertos and the concertos of 1782 are more summarily dealt with in a chapter each. From the tenth concerto on (Köchel No. 449, 1784) the author proceeds with careful special analyses for each of the last thirteen (which happen to represent also a main subject in Saint-Foix' simultaneous publication). Mr. Girdlestone's book, copiously furnished with music examples and equipped with several indices and a (not very comprehensive) Mozart bibliography, reveals after closer scrutiny some grave deficiencies. Take his elaborate analysis of Mozart's Concerto in A (Köchel No. 488). In the section devoted solely to a close explanation of the second movement, the author springs a sudden surprise on the initiated Mozart student by calling this movement persistently an "Andante". He obviously does not know that the tempo indication of the original is *Adagio*, that the character of this singular movement is one of tragic melancholy, and that its principal melody revolving round the harmonic pivot of the chord of the Neapolitan sixth (in bar 9/10), represents the closest forerunner to Beethoven's similar 6/8 F sharp minor *Adagio* in the famous Op. 106, with which it

¹ Eulenburg pocket scores Nos. 743, 721, 739, 740, 719, 736 (1936).

shares many features of type and general mood. The fact that Mr. Girdlestone is unaware of the tempo indication of Mozart's original MS must needs lead to certain damaging conclusions as to the general reliability of his results in musical research. His ignorance of Mozart's original in this special case is all the more startling, as the original MS of Köchel No. 488 is to be found in Paris itself, where his book was published. The general accessibility of this MS. (in the Bibl. du Conservatoire de Paris) is furthermore proved by the fact that Saint-Foix in his Vol. IV happens to publish a Facsimile of the first page of this very movement, showing the word "Adagio" written twice above the staves of bar 1 in Mozart's beautifully clear handwriting. Mr. Girdlestone prints on page 267 of his work a facsimile from the MS of Mozart's concerto in C minor (Köchel No. 491) belonging to the Royal College of Music, London, thereby testifying that he is alive to the graphic attraction of a Mozart manuscript. Why has he not availed himself of the opportunity to study the Paris MS. at the source? A careful perusal of his work discloses that he has obviously nowhere (except perhaps in the case of Köchel No. 491) consulted the original and that he obviously does not realize the mass of problems connected with the authentic text of Mozart's MSS. and the more or less adulterated reprints from the early days of André's editions onwards. He has most likely only consulted current modern editions of these concertos and never bothered to study either the original MSS. or their photostat copies in Anthony van Hoboken's unique collection. But in the case of Köchel No. 488 (as with Köchel Nos. 450, 466, 467, 491, 537) Mr. Girdlestone could have greatly added to his knowledge of the original by merely consulting the newly revised pocket scores in Eulenburg's edition. In this revised score the second movement bears the tempo mark "Adagio" and moreover the editor refers expressly to this case on page vi of his preface. But although Mr. Girdlestone mentions F. Blume's earlier essay on Mozart's pianoforte concertos, the revised edition of the six most famous concertos with their important prefaces and the sometimes startling results of their revision has been passed by unnoticed. Girdlestone has, therefore, nothing whatever to say to Blume's controversial but arresting theory about the role of the pianoforte as thoroughbass in the tuttis of these concertos. Blume enumerates carefully (page vii ff. of the preface to Eulenburg No. 736) the sections in which the original expressly excludes the thoroughbass function of the piano.² In his searching analysis of Mozart's "Coronation" Concerto (Köchel No. 537) Saint-Foix not only comments on Blume's theory and mentions the fact that André's first edition (1794) printed the thoroughbass figures as a running accompaniment below the left-hand stave of the solo, but quotes also a further article by F. Blume on this interesting problem of Mozart interpretation, published in 1937 in the *Acta Musicologica*, Vol. IX, fasc. III. Needless to say, this more recent contribution by F. Blume also remains unnoticed in Girdlestone's book, which seems strangely unaware of many as yet unsolved questions, emerging from Mozart's piano concertos. His comments on the question of ornaments and their interpretation in modern practice are almost negligible. Only the case of obviously incomplete or sketchy passages in the solo part has occasionally aroused his attention. The last sixteen bars of the second movement of Köchel No. 488 have for a long time been famous for their doubtful and fragmentary character: Girdlestone mentions in this connection only Reinecke's effort to add the necessary figurations and grace notes, but omits to quote the respective versions by Hummel and Alois Fuchs devoted to the same bars in previous editions. His own suggestion (published as music example 315 on page 401 of Vol. II), although not without merit, suffers from incompleteness itself: the whole of bar 88 of Mozart's score has been omitted, so that for all practical purposes Mr. Girdlestone's version is of little value. This may be due to one of the too numerous printer's errors in the book.

If Mr. Girdlestone (whose industry and enthusiasm are just as apparent as his faulty equipment and lack of insight into the problems of critical text revision) will accept

² In his revised edition of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 1 in C (Eulenburg score No. 724) W. Altmann (1935) prints the running figures for the accompanying thoroughbass pianoforte below the stave of the basses, thereby proving that this already obsolescent practice was still alive even as late as 1798.

sympathetic advice, he will now set to work immediately to repair the deficiencies of his book by carefully studying the original MSS. (or their photostat copies), by mentioning the libraries where the originals are kept in custody, by including detailed references to the recent gramophone recordings of these concertos, and finally by recasting all passages in his book based on wrong assumptions and incomplete knowledge of the originals. Then, but only then, will his study be able to fill the gap left open for so long by previous Mozart biographers.

Saint-Foix' Vol. IV represents a tremendous contrast in method to Girdlestone's eager but slightly amateurish efforts. In keeping with the style of the previous three volumes the whole book is organized on the lines of a Mozart dictionary with a musical quotation of the initial bars of every number in Köchel's Catalogue. The merits of Saint-Foix' work need no fresh praise. His close intellectual affinity to H. Abert's work makes it invaluable for the western reader who is excluded by bars of language from Abert's original. The carefully balanced analyses of the concertos and symphonies make excellent reading, but they suffer undoubtedly from the lack of music examples. Compared with Tovey's unsurpassable analytical masterpieces they miss in technical conclusiveness what they sometimes gain in literary aptness and lucidity of expression. The careful annotation of every MS. and its place in a public library or private collection alone makes this publication indispensable for the conscientious Mozart student, whom recent revised editions of Mozart (Einstein's and Mangeot's new editions of the string quartets) and their important results have made ever more alive to the necessity of consulting the original or its faithful equivalent rather than the garbled editions of the past century.

H. F. R.

[Dr. Redlich will deal with the problem of Mozart's piano concertos at greater length in a later issue of THE MUSIC REVIEW (ED.).]

About Conducting. By Sir Henry Wood. Pp. 124. (Sylvan Press.) 1945. 8s. 6d.

This little book contains valuable and essentially practical advice, based on sixty years' incredibly wide experience. It is not a handbook or course on conducting—indeed, Sir Henry rightly claims that the art cannot be taught by the written word—but every student and many experienced conductors will find here wisdom, shrewd observation and sound advice. Sir Henry was firm in his determination to improve the standard of orchestral playing in this country and to make concerts available to the widest possible public. To achieve both quantity and quality his methods were necessarily rigid. That he secured adequate performances at the "Proms" was astonishing enough, but that he often reached brilliancy is a fact often overlooked by his sterner critics. That he hoped and worked for better conditions is clearly shown by his advice on discipline (p. 41 *et seq.*). I would earnestly recommend this book to our present-day conductors and concert-promoters. Sir Henry asks for **permanent personnel**, at least nine hours rehearsal for a symphony concert and twelve if a new work is included. He ends by saying "My young colleague-to-be, if you see to this in the future you will be progressing . . . build up on what I have built: you can afford to do so, for, whereas I have had to peg away each year making, teaching and educating a public, you now have that public made for you".

G. B.

Ordeal by Music (The Strange Experience of Havergal Brian). By R. Nettel. Pp. x + 147. (Oxford University Press.) 1945. 12s. 6d.

In the days of King Edward VII, Tovey wrote "If all music between 1685 and 1759 were annihilated except the work of Bach and Handel, the ordinary music-lover would miss nothing but a large collection of decorative and decorous violin music and a still larger collection of arias". We have changed our musical manners, we of the English revival. But it is imperative to the understanding of this book that we should remember that Johann Sebastian Bach was not known in his day as a composer, but as a provider of music in the Leipsic Church, especially on the organ, as a working musician of full

competence, in fact. I cannot see this book as an isolated volume, for with all respect I cannot see that Havergal Brian's "ordeal by music" has been much more gruelling than that of any person who is let into the Minoan maze of art as practised in England. If we must have an account of this man's failure to stay the course, a coming composer of genius, we must demand two things—an opportunity to judge for ourselves, from scores, and a whole series of books about other writers and musicians and artists who have found similar, and sometimes even greater, handicaps to bar their recognition. "Unless men please, they are not heard at all", wrote Kipling in *The Fabulists*. I should not recommend any publisher to undertake the series unless he had a George Gissing to write all of them for him (and Mr. Nettel is not a Gissing). But names occur to me—Arthur Machen, George Douglas, Hubert Crackenthorpe among writers, Goring Thomas, Ivor Gurney, S. P. Waddington, Richard Walthew, and Felix White among musicians of recent days in England. Earning a living at anything is not a joke, but earning a living at music remains a problem unless you can sell your goods. This book is an account of how Havergal Brian thought he ought to be able to sell his goods, and found that he had stocked the wrong goods for public demand. He seems to have had little reserve stock behind.

Brian had undeniable talents, as those of us who knew him recognized. The man is not presented to us in this book in any realisation of flesh and blood. We do not see him, feel his hand, share his aspirations. He is a vague figure. His impracticalities are hinted at, but always with a stern censure of the hard world that could not fit him into the pattern of practical music-making. The world may be always wrong, but it is the place in which we have to live for the moment, until the next war annihilates us all, when no doubt we shall find a more Elysian path to tread. It is not impossible that Brian's music will blossom out in years to come as the only product of our age. I am inclined to doubt it from what I have seen and heard. I fancy he was "a stepping stone to higher things", and after all Elgar fiddled, and Mozart played, and Haydn was a rich man's servant, and Handel was bankrupt.

Under its grandiose title, this book exposes, not only an inability to present a character in the round, but also an extreme naïveté. I find the phrase (on p. 122) that Berlioz' "Requiem had its merits" a little jejune: so I do this sentence about Bantock and Brian—"The two men did not agree on all questions—politically they held different views—but they showed towards each other an unswerving loyalty that the hardest blows of fate were unable to sever". The praise of Dr. Heap suggests that he should be a candidate for my series of "Notable Failures". "A Swedish composer called Kurt Atterberg" pulled me up slightly, and I was quite staggered when I read (p. 118) "Is it to be wondered at that under these conditions the composer runs amok and curses the whole of society"? Few composers in my experience have ran amok, and we all, composers and non-composers, curse society to-day. On the same page one queries the word "great" of a setting of the *Te Deum*. Its use begs the question. The provincial notices and letters so frequently quoted in this book may prove that "the times are out of joint" but do not prove that Brian was not. I do not like the mysteries woven about his patron (after all, he *had* a patron, and not all of us musicians have been so lucky), nor the hints at the occult, at dreams and marvels and psychological insights. And, for a final word, I am unable to believe this passage about Brian's "habit of leg-pulling": Mr. Nettel writes, "The more solemn members of society regarded it with disapproval, and looked for some excuse to hit back. They liked to hit secretly and below the belt". Something is rotten in the state of Denmark, no doubt, but I fancy the successful musicians are too busy to look for excuses to hit below the belt. Has our author not yet heard of psycho-analysis?

The pages give a not uninteresting account of the musical world of the early 1900's—biased, informed more by hearsay than by recollection or exact knowledge, and curiously prone to accept casual and journalistic judgment as important and not as merely contributing to social history (terrifying responsibility on daily harassed critics!). "A talented man", says the author on p. 116, "endeavouring to earn his living by honest work in music". With that, as a needy practitioner myself, I have every sympathy,

but I hope no one will unrealistically immortalize me in a book with a high-sounding title when I find my goods will not sell and I have to become a civil servant or a crossing-sweeper. I should hate it if anyone but myself were blamed.

Galli-Curci's Life of Song. A Biography. By C. E. le Massena. Pp. 336. (The Paebar Company, New York.) 1945. \$3.75.

Never, so far in my life, has come the urge to read one of these "biographies" by American pep-journalists of successful and popular idols of the platform (my style is already affected, I observe). I have managed to avoid them, but I incline to think I was wrong. The first few pages of this book appalled me, but then I found I could not put it down, so entranced was I at learning a foreign language with such ease. "In New York", we read on p. 108, Galli-Curci's "knowledge of English was of value, for it enabled her to understand Americans". The opposite would, I fear, not be true. I cannot think English publishers would jump at a sentence which ends, "but—the love-bug brooks no interference". The first fine careless rapture will not last. As the author says on p. 177 ("Cycle of Expansion") "it's an old, old story". "Next day" (he continues) "the newspapers sky-rocketed their superlatives until their vocabularies became exhausted". Mr. le Massena's vocabulary is never exhausted. There was a momentary temptation to make an index of the various periphrases adopted by the resourceful writer to avoid repeating the hyphenated name. But that would have been like pinning butterflies on a board. The interest of this book seems to me almost entirely literary, though if its contents are accurate (which is not a matter of certainty) it may assist a new edition of *Löwenberg* or *Grove*. It should be classed as "curious", for it is more full of strange idioms than any document I have ever perused. How the lamented Logan Pearsall Smith would have enjoyed it!

H. J. F.

Reviews of Music

William Kroll. *Four Bagatelles* for String Quartet. (Schirmer: Chappell.) 1943. 78s. 6d.

Assuming that amateur string quartets exist in these days of knob-turning, these trifles should suit players whose ambitions are not such as to preclude them from unbending to a little drawing-room music occasionally. Of their kind they have distinct merit, and are the equivalent of the kind of music that Sibelius, for example, used to amuse himself by writing in his off hours. The bowing is carefully marked throughout, and there are no passages that should be beyond the capacity of the moderately competent player. Perhaps the first piece is the most attractive, though English ears might be a little disconcerted by the (no doubt unconscious) echo of a well-known song from *Merrie England*; but as everyone knows, these things *will* happen every now and then.

Lukas Foss. *The Prairie*. Poem by Carl Sandburg. Secular Cantata for Soli, Chorus and Orchestra. (Schirmer: Chappell.) 1944. 78s. 6d.

"Pioneers, O pioneers"! cries Walt Whitman somewhere or other, in a rhapsodic outburst, and Mr. Sandburg evidently shares his forerunner's admiration for men of brawn and the sterner aspects of the Middle West. Whether this particular poem is entirely suitable for music is a little more doubtful. At first sight such lines as these:

Have you heard my threshing crews yelling in the chaff of the straw-pile,
And the running wheat of the wagon boards?

do not seem to cry out for a musical setting. Nor, one feels, would many composers be moved to a lyric ecstasy by this sort of thing—

They are mine—the crowds of people at a Fourth of July basket picnic,
Listening to a lawyer reading the Declaration of Independence.

Nor would this nostalgic commencement of the section entitled *Songs in Eggs*:

Look at six eggs in a mocking-bird's nest,
Listen to six mocking-birds flinging follies of O-be-joyful over the
marshes and uplands.

seem to require immediate union with a concourse of sounds. But Mr. Foss evidently thought otherwise, and has set Mr. Sandburg's grandiloquent stanzas with a fervour and enthusiasm that command respect, if not an altogether unqualified admiration. The result is a feast of chromatic harmony and a flow of what one imagines must be the Wilder Western Soul. Rhythmically speaking, Mr. Foss is very much up-to-date, some pages recalling the *Sacre* in its madder moments. For instance, at the beginning of the second section there are no less than thirteen changes of time-signature in fifteen bars, nor is this the only audacity of the kind in his score. If his music is sometimes a trifle unconvincing, this may well be owing to its close affinity with the poem to which it has—dare one say?—been forcibly blended. For instance, at one point the soul of the prairie is made to claim as its own

Young men and women two by two hunting the by-paths and kissing bridges.

One assumes that "kissing bridges" is American for trysting places, otherwise a hasty reader might suppose that courting couples on the other side of the Atlantic relapse into a strange kind of atavistic behaviourism. But in any case, what *can* music do with this sort of thing?

It remains to be said that half way through the work the composer considerably suggests a break, or failing that, one minute's silence. This reviewer feels like suggesting, in lieu of any further criticism, a thoughtful silence of two minutes.

N. Medtner. (1) *Russian Round-Dance*. 5s. (2) *Knight-Errant*. 10s. Op. 58. For Two Pianos. (Augener.)

Isidor Philipp. (Editor.) *Study for Velocity*. Adolf Henselt. 2s. 6d.
Study in Extension. Sigismund Thalberg. 2s. 6d.
Scherzo. Emile Forgues. 4s.
Capriccio. Brahms. 2s. 6d.

Norman Dello Joio. *Suite for Piano*. 3s. 6d.
Prelude: To a Young Dancer. 2s. 6d.
Prelude: To a Young Musician. 2s. 6d.
(G. Schirmer, Inc., New York.)

Pride of place in this collection of piano pieces must be given to the Medtner works, for Medtner is not only a distinguished composer, but unquestionably the finest living writer for the pianoforte. As long ago as 1914 Ernest Newman pointed out that Medtner succeeded in producing the effect of complete originality while working in the ordinary harmonic medium, and this remains true of him to-day. Medtner's idiom is as distinct and unmistakeable as that of any of the great masters, nor does he need to recourse to ultra-chromaticism, the refuge of those who desire to conceal poverty of thought. Moreover, he has a perfect understanding of the genius of the piano, unlike Bartók and Stravinsky, whose detestable habit of writing for it as a purely percussive instrument is so maddening to any sensitive listener. In these two superb pieces we have a valuable addition to the growing library of two-piano music. Perhaps the *Round-Dance* will have the most immediate appeal, with its cheerful bucolic themes, set against a carillon-like background, but *Knight-Errant* is probably the finer of the two. Written in first movement form, it consists of three strongly marked themes which are fully worked out, the

development section containing an effective fugue founded on the first subject. Musically speaking both pieces are of a high order, and one hopes that there will be frequent opportunities of hearing them, for they form a welcome contrast to the brittle and bloodless rubbish poured out by many of Medtner's better-known or—should one say—better-boasted contemporaries.

For the rest, it remains to chronicle rather small beer. M. Philipp has chosen to re-issue some studies by those forgotten worthies, Henselt, Thalberg and Forgues, which virtuosos who enjoy fire-works may like to let off in place of the usual Lisztian variety. Incidentally, the Brahms *Capriccio* looks here like an aristocrat in the company of some rather flashy *parvenus*. Joio's pieces may have been designed as an introduction to modern harmony; actually they give the impression of a pianist adopting the Christian attitude of not letting his right hand know what the left is doing. Each piece begins, continues and ends without leaving any clear impression of why the composer adopted any one of the three alternatives—particularly the first.

Robin Milford. Two Anthems. (1) *By the Waters of Babylon*. 5d.
(2) *Up to those bright and glad some hills*. 5d.

Alan Rawsthorne. *We Three Merry Maidens*. For High Voice. 2s. 6d. (Oxford University Press.)

These works show that both composers are accomplished craftsmen, but equally that they lack that indefinable quality that is suggested in Browning's line from *Abt Vogler*.

The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky.

Their music, that is to say, has no warmth. The two anthems are well written, and if they appear somewhat stark and severe this may be accounted for by the fact that they were dedicated to Gustav Holst, high-priest of austerity. The Rawsthorne song is effective in a dry, ironic fashion, though it will always require a talented singer to bring it off, more especially as it is something over-long for its slight musical content. But the sad fact remains that both composers have failed to infuse their music with passion; it is of the head and not of the heart and so it never "leaves the ground".

Alessandro Scarlatti. *Christmas Cantata*. For Soprano Solo, String Quartet and Harpsichord. Edited and translated by Edward J. Dent. (Oxford University Press.) 2s. 6d.

A wholly delightful work in the very best Scarlatti vein, bearing the same relationship to a Bach Cantata as sparkling Moselle to rich Burgundy. It consists of an extended *ritornello* followed by three recitatives and arias, the second of which is particularly charming. Here is a real gem of music awaiting any enterprising soprano who is looking for something off the beaten track. The fact that the editing and translation have been undertaken by Professor Dent is a sufficient guarantee of the excellence of both.

C. W. O.

William Walton. *Violin Concerto*. Full Score. (O.U.P.) 12s. 6d.

Walton's violin Concerto, written in 1939, still remains the last major concert work written by this composer, and the closer knowledge of the work which publication of the score permits, leaves one still rather puzzled about it. It is a work which is predominantly romantic in conception: no more lyrical tune than the first theme of the first movement has ever been written, and the solo instrument broods upon it again in the Finale; even in the scherzo, a place where Walton usually lets off his fire-works, there is a melancholy horn theme (in the trio) and a romantic violin tune in sixths which is treated to a more heartfelt and extensive peroration than the scurrying opening ever gets. Certainly, romantic expressiveness is nothing to complain about, nor is the tender (and expert) treatment of the solo violin. Exploration of the lyrical vein is nothing new, either, in this composer's work, as anyone who knows the viola Concerto or the slow

movement of the Symphony will confirm. Where this work, like some of Walton's other compositions, is puzzling, is in the juxtaposition of such rhapsodic passages with abrupt outbursts like the main scherzo theme or the sardonic orchestral grumbings which so often accompany the soloist's less significant utterances. Such passages in this work give the impression at times of irrelevant interruptions of the prevailing mood which do not appear justifiable for the sake of contrast since often they merge imperceptibly into further ruminations of the old intimate nature. Knowing the violin Concerto alone, one might think that the prickly bits were out of style, incongruous interpolations made to conform to current fashion: but *Portsmouth Point* and the brilliant *Scapino* show that prickles are as Waltonian as roses—it is in growing the two on the same stem that the composer has as yet failed. You advance to breathe in the fragrance and recoil hastily with a thorn, incontinently grafted to a petal, sticking in your nose. The explanation is probably technical rather than emotional; there was not necessarily any real incongruity in 1939, nor is there to-day, in the combining of aspiration for an ideal with cynicism as to its possible attainment, and Walton's problem was perhaps less one of psychological conflict than of musical fusion.

This view is confirmed by the method of construction of the violin Concerto. The end of the calm exposition of the first movement, for example, is followed abruptly by a grumpy orchestral passage, where bits of the themes, grotesquely transformed, their accents awry, are played against *sforzando* and irreverently orchestrated counterpoints. But this leads to a tender development of the main theme by the soloist in a high register. A cadenza provides a pause; then the same process, with a different theme and in a different, but still rather queasy mood, is repeated. This type of process is, in fact, Walton's basic method for keeping the musical action going. The work, so closely integrated in terms of formal analysis, is highly rhapsodic in utterance: the apparent incongruities of mood are really a technical means of setting new rhapsodies in motion, and at the same time the essentially episodic rather than organic nature of the work explains the piece-meal effect that parts of it give.

A really satisfactory integration of his ideas is, it seems, the problem which Walton has still to solve, a problem to which Elgar incidentally never found a solution. But, as in Elgar again, there is so much in Walton's music of original beauty and true inspiration that, while noting the vices, one must be aware that they are the price of many virtues. Certainly the virtues predominate in the violin Concerto; for it reveals a lyrical gift of so rare an order that one may criticise parts of the work without being suspected of trying to belittle its overall importance.

J. S. Bach. *Three Choral Preludes* transcribed for Viola and Piano by Watson Forbes and Alan Richardson. (O.U.P.) 3s. 6d., 2s. 6d. and 3s. each.

The critics have been moaning for so long at the general ignorance of Bach's Choral Preludes that they can hardly reject transcription as a means of popularisation. And these arrangements are satisfactory musically, provided you remember that the result is different from, though not necessarily much less valuable than the original. In the two three-part preludes the tune taken over by the viola is naturally more highly coloured and less clear-cut than the two tunes played by the piano; the final choral entries lose something, too, in being transferred from the organ's pedals to the piano's percussive octaves. But this is inevitable. On the other hand, in the *coloratura* "Come, Redeemer of our race", the viola can give to the choral melody an expressiveness which is lost on even the most resourceful of organs.

These editions should have gained much if the arrangers had added the German titles, the name of the set of preludes in an easily accessible edition in which they could be found, and at least one verse of the words of the choral.* A short note on Bach's choral preludes in general would not have been out of place either. This is a good job half done.

* The German titles are: "Allein Gott", "Nun, Komm' der Heiden Heiland", and "Herr Jesu Christ". They are all taken from the "Eighteen" Preludes, Book XVII in Novello's edition.

Robin Milford. *Two Easter Meditations* for Organ. (O.U.P.) 3s. 6d.

An "English Tradition", the absence of which was so regrettable fifty years ago, is now almost oppressive. Here is another product of it. There is some imaginative writing in these pieces, particularly in the first of them, but one wearies quickly of the continual consecutive fifths, of the lack of rhythmic vitality of an endless quaver accompaniment in the second piece, and of uninterrupted meditation.

Victor Babin. *Sonata-Fantasia* for Violoncello and Piano (Augener.) 8s.

This is first rate vivid stuff. It has many of the characteristics which the younger school of American composers has taught us to consider typically American—a bristling and witty harmonic idiom, an athletic economic counterpoint, and a tendency to repeat a rhythmic pattern of notes for cumulative effect. There are, too, in the slow passages, the brooding blocks of two-part octave counterpoint which we find in Copland's sonatas. The idiom, then, is familiar; but it is exploited with a sureness and absence of self-consciousness which are sufficiently rare to be notable. Apart from the wealth of inventiveness, fastidiously controlled, which this work contains, it demonstrates, too, that it is possible (but only just) to write a really satisfactory sonata for cello and piano, that most difficult of all combinations. Here the balance is well struck. That achievement alone should commend it to enterprising pianists and cellists, but in addition this is a work of high quality and higher promise.

N. G. L.

Thomas F. Dunhill. *Triptych*. Three Impressions for Viola and Orchestra. Arrangement for piano and viola. (Oxford University Press.) 5s.

The viola is a beautiful solo instrument; previously attention has been drawn in this journal to the scarcity of pieces composed especially for it. Here is a suite of pieces which are not only essentially musical in themselves, but which exploit the characteristics of the viola with considerable insight and some subtlety. At least one of them demands of the performer execution at almost virtuoso level.

I have not seen the orchestral version; the piano score reads well and is effective. I do not agree with the composer, however, as to the necessity of the long cut he suggests in one of the movements when played with piano. He should have the courage to present his work for performance as a whole—which is how he composed it whichever the accompaniment. The fact that Tertis has edited the viola part should recommend the work immediately to soloists. With due humility—for that great violist has obviously taken great pains—and at the risk of appearing callow, I would make the following suggestion to all writers and arrangers for the viola:—That wherever possible quick transitions between the G and F clefs should be avoided. I know more than one amateur chamber player who can play a satisfying part in classical quartets, many movements of which are most exacting for the viola, but almost all of which stay in the F clef throughout. The same players almost always face with acute discomfort the prospect of making frequent and rapid mental jumps from clef to clef. I mention this because I intend to lose no time in introducing Mr. Dunhill's work to as many viola students and players as I know, and apologies will be necessary for some of its merely apparent difficulty.

Cedric Thorpe Davie. *Dirge for Cuthullin*. For Chorus and Orchestra. Piano Score. (Oxford University Press.) 1s. 6d.

To review an orchestral work from a piano reduction is really unfair on both reviewer and composer. One has to choose between regarding the score for what it is, e.g. a cantata with piano accompaniment, and trying to imagine its potential effectiveness from the inadequate piano part. Unlike Dunhill's work reviewed above, this work *needs* the orchestra, and to attempt an assessment of its effectiveness from voice and piano parts is to throw away the best part of it. The instrumentation is lavishly cued into the almost unplayable accompaniment and one is able to see from this what the composer is about. I imagine he is successful to a much greater degree than most who attempt the invocation

of the Celtic *geist* by way of settings of Celtic saga. (The words are from the Ossian of Macpherson.) For example, his work is well out of the class of Welsh Eistedfodder. The vocal parts are of extreme simplicity. If pianists can be found to make anything of the accompaniment the work will get performed by the Choral Societies whom this edition is intended to serve. This cannot be much satisfaction to the composer who has written an orchestral work with chorus. If, which is unlikely, orchestral societies can be persuaded to bring in a full chorus for the necessary fifteen minutes, we may well hear something unusually effective. The world is full of unperformed cantatas for the reasons implicit in these conditions and I believe that Mr. Davie's work does not deserve to remain unperformed.

J. B.

London Concerts

One event overshadows all others: the visit of the Concertgebouw Orchestra under its conductor Eduard van Beinum. Their performance of Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique* in the Stoll Theatre on 10th March and of Haydn's *Miracle Symphony* (broadcast) the following day were models of technical skill and integrated musical expression, each in their own widely divergent styles. On another page Mr. Philip Blake contrasts the fine musicianship of our distinguished visitors with the rough mediocrity of our native orchestras. His letter carries full editorial agreement. London has too many orchestras; they are all too small and their personnel are by no means uniformly distinguished in the quality of their musicianship. That the remedy is obvious is no guarantee that it will be applied while hard cash is ranked higher than artistry.

Other events worth noting have been: the B.B.C. concert on 6th February conducted by Albert Wolff, Barbirolli's magnificent performance of *La Gazza Ladra* with the Philharmonia Orchestra three days later, the finely drawn intensity of Monique Haas' playing of the Mozart D minor Concerto with the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Ernest Ansermet on 17th February, Mozart's third horn Concerto (Dennis Brain) and the *Siegfried Idyll* at the Philharmonia concert on 23rd March conducted by Walter Süsskind and the *Prometheus* ballet music and Brahms' third Symphony played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Eduard van Beinum on 24th March.

With vivid memories of the brilliance of Wolff's pre-war performance of Berlioz' *Romeo and Juliet* in Queen's Hall, it was infuriating to hear him wasting his time directing the B.B.C. Orchestra in the one Berlioz work we feel sure they could play in their sleep, apart from merely seeming to do so: need we specify *Carnaval Romain*? Even so, he made it sound cleaner and more subtle than has been usual of late and followed with the most convincing reading of Franck's Symphony we can remember. His real triumph, however, was scored with Ravel's *Mother Goose Suite*. Barbirolli's concert was memorable throughout for its emotional continuity alternating with savage intensity: the *Midsummer Night's Dream* Suite had one or two uncomfortable moments, the *Traviata* preludes sounded almost Italian, Rossini's magpie became a Mephistophelian bird of prey and Schubert's "Great C major" Symphony sounded like the masterpiece it is so often said to be. The two concerts given by the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Ansermet and van Beinum respectively indicate that this orchestra could again become first-class under a first-rate permanent conductor. At present their standard is unpredictable, at times disgusting, at others promising, and we believe that Mr. Blake's remarks on discipline hit the nail fairly and squarely on the head. Under a Beecham, a Furtwängler or a Bruno Walter they could crown a glorious past with an equally illustrious future. Meanwhile we must live in hope. Walter Süsskind has every reason to be satisfied with his Philharmonia concert; deputising at the last moment for John Barbirolli, his Mozart and Wagner were eloquent of his insight and musical imagination, fully off-setting the rather pedestrian quality of his reading of Rossini's *Barber*, possibly due to a certain lack of understanding between orchestra and conductor.

G. N. S.

A New Venture

KING'S THEATRE, HAMMERSMITH: 4TH MARCH, 1946

In those far-off unregenerate Victorian days of capitalism, there was always money to be found for the erection of a library or a concert hall. Materialism, as we like to call it now, was not always so generous in the provision of books or concerts. To-day, in our enlightened new age of reason, we find the position reversed. A proletarian government subsidises concerts through the Arts Council of Great Britain, but does nothing to provide places suitable for their hearing, nor even to repair war-damaged buildings devoted to music. The recent increased demand for orchestral concerts (how long it will last none can tell) has filled London's musical cup so full that music has, so to say, slopped over the edge into the saucer, some of it, indeed, even on to the table cloth and the carpet. The latest enterprise is a "season of plays and music" presented by T.R.T., which, I have heard a rumour, means Travelling Repertory Theatre, under the direction of Basil C. Langton, in association with the Arts Council, and People's Plays, Ltd., and by arrangement with Jack Buchanan. The "concert director" is Anthony Bernard, who conducted the first concert with his London Chamber Orchestra, and the "concerts manager" Elizabeth Poston—a list of "credits" that would not disgrace a Hollywood "feature". It is a large theatre, with long and famous stage associations, and to judge by the musical carriage of sound must be a joy for actors to speak in. The small orchestra sounded larger than life in the stalls; in the circle it was almost overwhelming, and I do not recommend the gallery, for not only does it fill up with sound but it has those ancient thrones of the gods, padded strips screwed to the floor without backs or arms. The acoustic richness was particularly noticeable in the Tchernepine Concerto, in which the soloist-composer persistently plays his instrument from start to finish, and rang out with his tone all over the house.

Mr. Bernard uses only the front half of the stage, away from the back wall and with no more than a cloth behind him, and uses this space to its full by arranging his orchestra on an angle, himself standing by the prompt corner near the proscenium. It was an interesting start to the series. The brass in the *Magic Flute* overture was firm and rich, and the strings adequate all through the concert (e.g. in Lennox Berkeley's slight but quite charming *Serenade* for strings). But a programme that contains *Pulcinella* as well as a new concerto and a Haydn symphony (No. 99) needs more rehearsal than Mr. Bernard was evidently able to get, both for accuracy and finish. He was inclined to over-play his effects, especially in the Stravinsky where a stronger beat would have done for the rhythm what an expressive left hand tried to do for the tone-colour. As for the Tchernepine piano Concerto, I confess it passed me by. I found it fluent and unimportant—a strip of neo-Romantic Russian wall-paper.

H. J. F.

Manchester

DAS LIED VON DER ERDE

On 9th April John Barbirolli conducted a performance of Mahler's masterpiece given by the Hallé Orchestra with Catherine Lawson and Parry Jones as soloists. To dismiss *Das Lied von der Erde* summarily as being "trite and naive" (which one critic has done) is to brand oneself as insensitive to its complicated emotional background and to emphasize in a particular instance the narrow insularity of native criticism. Mahler's genius as an executive musician never was in doubt: let it be said here and now that to dispute his genius as a composer is merely to betray an ignorance of his work or incompetence to form a judgment.

Das Lied von der Erde was finished thirty-eight years ago. There can have been few performances indeed which have penetrated to the core of the music as did Barbirolli's. In a score of such complexity it goes without saying that there were flaws in the orchestral texture and it must be recorded that neither Parry Jones nor Catherine Lawson possess the range or the tone one hopes to hear in an ideal performance of this exacting score. But once we realize that every performance must be in a sense a compromise, we are immediately in a better position to assess the value of this one as an artistic achievement. The clean and fluent style of the orchestra gave us positive proof of the trouble that had been taken to ensure that a carefully integrated and fully rounded artistic entity should be presented to the audience. Such a combination of sincerity and real hard work, spread more evenly over the thirty-eight year period, would have ensured Mahler's position as a composer once for all, even in this country, long before 1946. It remains to record that Catherine Lawson's singing improved from an understandably nervous opening to culminate in a really imaginative and deeply-felt interpretation of "The Farewell", while Parry Jones redeemed some indifferent work in the earlier numbers with a first-class pungent version of "Der Trunkene im Frühling". No other conductor at present in this country could have achieved a comparable result, while very few are sufficiently aware of what hard work means to be able to begin to make the attempt. To have to write that no London critic thought it worth his while to make the journey to Manchester may cast a disquieting reflection upon their assumed devotion to their calling. However, they alone remain the losers—of a first-rate evening's experience and of at least a tittle of their reputations.

G. N. S.

Gramophone Records

Readers will note with some satisfaction that the Chancellor has reduced his tax on Art in one respect, as from 9th April. The Purchase Tax on gramophone records now reverts to the original scale first levied in 1940, i.e. 1s. 4d. on six shilling records and *pro rata*. [Ed.]

Britten: *A Ceremony of Carols*;

Kodály: *Ave Maria*; and

Bartók: *Enchanting Song*.

The Morrision Boys' Choir, Ivor Sims, Choirmaster; Maria Korchinska, Harp.

Decca K 1155-7. 12s.

Benjamin Britten's work takes up five sides of this set and consists of ten songs with solo harp accompaniment and an interlude for harp alone. Britten is an extremely clever young man; when extreme cleverness is allied with artistic genius we are always presented, sooner or later, with whimsies or paradoxes. That is a commonplace in all the arts. Here is nothing whimsical, unless it be the idea of the harp, but paradox abounds. Take small boys. This work was clearly written for them. In his opera the central character (it is no use pretending that the hairy-chested Grimes is the central character; to do so is to miss the whole point) is a small boy, miserable and dumb. The central character of this work is a small boy whose voice was to ring round the world and down the ages, whose praises were to be sung by countless men and women in countless places of worship. They are here sung very beautifully indeed by small boys because only small boys can make the kind of noise the composer wants.

The bigger paradox adorns the score itself. If one knew only *Hymn to St. Cecilia* one would never recognize this work and that to have come from one pen. Anyone who knew the *Michaelangelo Sonnets* would immediately know that their composer wrote

* Strongly recommended.

the *Carols*. Indeed, the brilliant trick that makes *Sonnet XXX* one of the finest songs of our time occurs in striking guise in the *Carols*.

Now let it be said that this work is a thing of enchanting beauty and of enduring worth. Fully sensible of what this means, I believe that nothing of greater loveliness has been written for voices in our time. *Hymn to St. Cecilia* heralded a new star; a star it is true who had radiated a lot of whimsical side lights, but a star. The *Sonnets* were an ascent beyond the regions of mere promise. The *Ceremony of Carols* is transcendental.

There are inequalities. "Freezing Winter Night" and "Deo Gratia", though these are the only two of which this can be said, do not completely embrace the spirit of the text. The harp interlude is bound to be excised from the body of the work in time. It is simply out of place. The fact that Weber wrote its tune does not matter. The fact that it sounds utterly banal does, and any honest critic who sees the real glory of these carols must refuse to consider the harp solo as belonging to them. It is fairly short and fully to enjoy these records one simply cuts it out.

The singing of the Morriston Choir is magnificent and one is bound to forgive some roughness of attack in the very difficult "The Little Babe". The child who sings solo in "Bulalulow" and "Spring Carol" more than deserves whatever goes with a mention on the label,—which he does not get. The recording is excellent and Maria Korchinska's sensitive harp accompaniment comes out well over the whole range.

The Kodály piece is wonderful. Britten's translucence shows up well beside the solidity of the older composer's harmonic idiom; but at the same time one is made to see how readily and completely depth and perspective satisfy the ear. Bartók's little thing has a lesson too. Britten's carol, "The Little Babe", moves rapidly and the boys do not sing it very well. "Enchanting Song" is equally dynamic and the boys' attack leaves nothing to be desired. That is because they are much more sure of what they have to attack. There is a well-fixed tonal centre and every approach to it is by a path unobstructed by the completely unexpected. There is no criticism here of course, but the point is made that Britten's writing has many pitfalls; that this choir should have sung so beautifully in avoiding almost all of them is to commend them and Ivor Sims very highly.

*Sibelius: "Karelia" Suite, Alla Marcia and Intermezzo.**

B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, c. Beecham.

His Master's Voice DB 6248. 6s.

Slight though the music from Opus 11 may be, these pieces are in no way to be compared with, say the trivia of Edward Elgar or the Hungariana of Brahms. Virile and colourful, the *Karelia* pieces escape the obvious and have a cleanly tuneful line with nothing of subtlety. Except for an obvious error in tone by what was probably one member of the wood-wind but sounds like ten (towards the end of the intermezzo) the playing is to a very high standard and the recording is excellent.

Purcell: "Sound the Trumpet", "Let us Wander" and "Shepherd, Shepherd".

Isobel Baillie and Kathleen Ferrier, acc. Gerald Moore.

Columbia DB 2201. 3s. 3d.

These duets, the last is from the Masque *King Arthur*, are beautifully performed. In the case of both singers we have a pureness of tone and a clarity of diction which greatly enhance the simplicity of Purcell's vocal line. This is not great, or even important music; but this excellently recorded as it is, is how it should sound.

Moskowski: Spanish Dances, Nos. 1-5.

City of Birmingham Orchestra, c. George Weldon.

Columbia DX 1225-6. 8s.

Even for lovers of salon music, it must surely be necessary, in order to enjoy this stuff, to know nothing at all of Spain. There are few scores more spurious and emptily flashy

than this chestnut which at no point catches anything of Spanish atmosphere and idiom. In every department except content this is a fine set of records, but there is no glory in that,—for anyone. At the rate he is performing this kind of trash, Mr. Weldon, whom we hope is going to be a great conductor is also going to have a lot to live down: his smallish orchestra is meanwhile likely to establish itself as quite the best national purveyor of eating music.

Walton: Sinfonia Concertante.

Phyllis Sellick and City of Birmingham Orchestra, c. William Walton; and
Film Music, Henry V, "Death of Falstaff" and "Touch her Soft Lips".
 Philharmonia String Orchestra, c. William Walton.

His Master's Voice C 3478-80. 12s.

The film music takes up one side of the three discs. It is nicely played and if you saw the film will remind you how excellently Walton's score helped to provide atmosphere.

The present version of the piano Concerto is the revised score of 1943, the work having been published in its original form in 1927. The title is not an affectation. The treatment of the piano with relation to the orchestra is quite definitely on eighteenth century concerto lines. Not so the rest of the conception. One sees many and diverse influences at work. For example, one Mozart wrote the charming tune with which the piano makes its first solo entry. Young William Walton, darling of the I.S.C.M. in the good old days, whose *Portsmouth Point* tickled the sophisticated ear of Uncle Diaghilev, is responsible for the orchestration. A wiser Walton, who may still not miss real greatness ahead of his contemporaries, is responsible for some touches and reorganising. It is not a satisfying work. I do not for a minute think that its composer can even now be satisfied with it and do not see why we should be.

Withal, I recommend a hearing. There are some delicious episodes, and the last movement makes the set almost worth buying. Amongst the great, only Beethoven could take a cheap and jiggy tune, use the solo instrument to point out in detail its obvious, facile nature, handle it massively in the tuttis, repeat it a score of times and then write *finis* to a great last movement. Walton does not do this,—he is not Beethoven, and so long as he can produce revisions like this one we are not sure how great he is going to be,—but he shows that he could have done. A very brief, racy last movement uses a bugle tune known to every Boys' Brigade, so artfully—though massively—that we want lots more of it and for us the movement ends much too soon. It does not end for Mr. Walton; he winds up with a nasty, meretricious re-hash of some first movement material that sounded ill enough in its context and here dies on us completely.

The performance is good, especially on the part of Miss Sellick, and the recording acceptable. J. B.

Tchaikovsky: "Eugen Onegin", Waltz from Act 2; Polonaise from Act 3.

London Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Beecham.

His Master's Voice DB 6266. 6s.

If one likes these things, then, presumably, one will like Beecham laying it on with a trowel. The brass is much too prominent, and the general effect is of flatness and dullness due to absence of "atmosphere". The recording is quite clean.

Mozart: "Die Entführung aus dem Serail", Overture.

London Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Beecham.

His Master's Voice DB 6251. 6s.

Here again the brass is much too strong, but the performance and recording are clean if not inspiring. The improvement in extent of frequency response reveals, on side 2, that the triangulist has a lot of work to do, and he seems to do so much that one doubts whether the composer would have thought it all so necessary.

Delius : "The Walk to the Paradise Garden". (arr. Beecham.)

Hallé Orchestra, c. Barbirolli.

His Master's Voice C 3484. 4s.

Kodály started his *Hary Janos* Suite with an orchestral sneeze, to indicate that the story must not be taken too seriously. This record starts with a cough (human) which echoes round the hall. Possibly the Gramophone Company felt there was something in Kodály's notion, and made this apologetic introduction to a thoroughly nasty piece of work. The beauty of Delius' music lies in its fineness, and thickening the hairlines results only in a splurge of sound which means nothing at all. So far as one can hear through the peasoup fog (and the metaphors are not mixed without forethought) the performance is normal; but the recording is so poor that it is difficult to form an opinion. An appreciable movement of the top-cut control made no appreciable difference to the reproduction. One can only suppose there was no "top" to cut. The lie is thus given to the present reviewer's statement a year ago in this journal—that Barbirolli was a safe buy; but it also proves that a conductor with a microphone sense is helpless when the recording engineer slips up.

Dvořák : *Carneval Overture*.

City of Birmingham Orchestra, c. George Weldon.

Columbia DX 1235. 4s.

Although somewhat deficient in bass, the recording is good. This deficiency helps to create the picture in one's mind that the performance is reminiscent of a prize-winning brass band's triumphal concert in its native town on return from the Crystal Palace, or wherever brass band contests are held nowadays. The *Carneval* overture may not have the merits of the Brahms *Academic Festival*, but it is not a negligible work. Here it is murdered, or so it sounds on the disc.

Chopin : *Nocturne No. 4 in F., Op. 19; Etude No. 25 in F minor; Etude No. 27 in A flat.*

Harriet Cohen.

Columbia DX 1231. 4s.

Good piano records are few and far between; this is not one of the few. These three somewhat uninteresting compositions are played adequately by Miss Cohen, who probably did not keep the loud pedal down all the time; but the record suggests she did.

Falla : "El Amor Brujo"—*Ritual Fire Dance and Dance of Terror*.

José Iturbi.

His Master's Voice DA 1853. 4s.

Iturbi's performance is somewhat hard and aggressive. Perhaps an aggressive technique is indicated for these B.B.C. favourites, but it seems all wrong. The chief fault of this record is in the piano tone, which is most unsatisfactory. It is not due to top cut-off which mutilates the transient wave-front and gives that awful pong-pong effect (illustrated to perfection in the notorious Horowitz records of the Brahms No. 2 Concerto). The recording engineers have found a new way to make a piano sound poor. Incidentally, there seems to be a serious absence of bass, which only succeeds in making matters worse.

Falla : "Nights in the Gardens of Spain".

Clifford Curzon (piano) and the National Symphony Orchestra, c. Enrique Jorda.

Decca K 1158-60. 12s.

A good set of this interesting work would always be welcome. The question is "Is this a good set?" and the answer must be "On the whole no, but in parts yes". The piano is too near the microphone and sometimes drowns the orchestra; but as the B.B.C. has been doing this for years, we must not be too hard on the Decca Company for doing the

same. When the piano part is *pp* to *mf*, the tone is very good indeed, but when it is *ff*, then we have to stop and ask ourselves where all this "frrr" recording is taking us. The reviewer uses an electrical gramophone which, from pick-up stylus to speaker output, is as near linear from 40 to 12,000 cycles per second as matters, and it is unusually free from distortion of wave-form. Presumably, therefore, he would revel in this wide-range Decca recording. In practice he doesn't. As soon as there is a musical build-up, something begins to split at the top end of the scale, which doesn't happen with first-class recordings of other makes. What is the matter with these new Decca discs? The producers make serious claims which must be considered seriously, and the reviewer must listen quite unbiassedly, with the greatest care. Those who have high-fidelity gramophones will be thoroughly conversant with the falling off in quality near the label of a heavily cut record. That is the effect that one gets on loud passages at any point on these discs. Without further investigation, it would be indiscreet to pass a final judgment. It is hoped that an opportunity will arise for this further investigation, after which a report will be issued in these pages.

Meanwhile, the set can be recommended for ordinary gramophones, but the high-fidelity fan will have to use the top-cut control.

Tchaikovsky : Casse Noisette Suite.

National Symphony Orchestra, c. Stanford Robinson.

Decca K 1142-4. 12s.

It must be said in all fairness that Tchaikovsky's delicate orchestration is well brought out. Louder passages tend to get muzzy, as pointed out in the notes on the Falla set. The quietness of much of the work emphasizes the surface noise, which is more prominent than on some other makes of records. It is an old truism that surface noise is made unduly prominent by resonances in the reproducing system; but in the absence of resonances, the surface noise is quite tolerable even in wide-range reproduction, provided the mix is free from large particles. The surface noise on this set is of the type where you can visualise the stylus hitting little bits of grit in the groove, and no amount of brushing can get rid of it. "Frrr" recording—and reproduction—demand a very smooth material for the records.

On the whole, however, it can be said that this set is probably the best there is of the work; and Stanford Robinson is very competent at this sort of music.

*Handel: Semele, Aria "Oh sleep! Why dost thou leave me?"**

Atalanta, Aria "Come, beloved".

Ada Alsop and the Boyd Neel String Orchestra, c. Boyd Neel.

Decca K 1164. 4s.

Two lesser known Handel arias, beautifully sung, with very good articulation, for which we must thank both the singer and the Decca Company. H. A. H.

*Strauss : Till Eulenspiegels Lustige Streiche, Op. 28.**

Boston Symphony Orchestra, c. Koussevitsky.

His Master's Voice DB 6268-69. 12s.

This is the recording which was recently issued in the United States pressed on vinylite. The English version appears on normal shellac. We have heard both forms and are not prepared to acclaim the vinylite as being the possessor of any very obvious advantages except a lesser liability to breakage. What is really remarkable about these records is that they are the very first we have ever heard of American origin which produce a fine and comparatively distortionless musical sound. They are not comparable with *The Planets* set which remains the finest commercial recording yet made, but allowing for the fact that this Boston *Till* carries nothing effective above about 8,000 cycles, the resultant sound is exceptionally pleasant. Only full volume reproduction on an instrument

capable of rediffusion up to some 12,000 cycles will betray the comparatively low "cut-off". The string tone then becomes hard and upper partials are conspicuous by their absence. But though the range is restricted the quality is good. The performance is quite as good as we should expect and the records are therefore strongly recommended as the best available version.

Mozart: Das Veilchen (K.476), and

Schubert: Dass Sie hier gewesen. Op. 59, No. 2.

Elisabeth Schumann and Gerald Moore.

His Master's Voice DA 1854. 4s.

A very disappointing record, not in the least comparable with those made by the same artist before the war. Mme Schumann's diction is not clear, while both songs would benefit enormously from a cleaner cut vocal line. The former is in fact a "little beastliness".

Verdi: Di' tu se fedele, il flutto in aspetta ("Ballo in maschera")* and *Questa O quella* ("Rigoletto").

Jussi Björling and Orchestra, c. Grevillius.

His Master's Voice DA 1837. 4s.

This more than maintains the very high standard we have come to expect of all Björling's records. No criticism can be offered, except to mention a trace of distortion on climaxes.

*Hugo Wolf (ed. Max Reger): Italian Serenade.**

The Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Süsskind.

Columbia DX 1236. 4s.

A fine recording of a magnificent performance, this fills a long-standing gap in the recorded repertoire and can be recommended without reservation.

Verdi: Ah! Fors è lui ("Traviata"), and

Sempre libera ("Traviata").

Joan Hammond and the Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Süsskind.

His Master's Voice C 3486. 4s.

We feel Miss Hammond would have been wiser to have sung these arias in their original Italian, for the English translations seem to lend an extra edge to the hard quality of her voice in its upper register. Otherwise the verve and brilliance of this record is most refreshing as a contrast to more normal conceptions of what is proper to "Opera in English".

Sibelius: Violin Concerto in D minor. Op. 47.*

Ginette Neveu and the Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Süsskind.

His Master's Voice DB 6244-47. 24s.

Some years ago Jascha Heifetz recorded this Concerto for the Sibelius Society with the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Sir Thomas Beecham. That set, much heralded in its own day as authoritative and "the last word", sounds thin and old by comparison with the records now under review. If Heifetz over emphasized the cold aloof element in Sibelius' music by pushing relentlessly ahead with a minimum of rubato, Mdlle. Neveu more than restores the balance with an interpretation which is warm, for the most part slow-moving, and very romantic in conception.

These two versions, considered together, show clearly the limitations of musical notation as a sign language. Both Heifetz and Neveu have complete justification for treating the work as they do, yet neither in style nor mood is there any common bond

between them. We do not recommend the reader to consider buying the early version in view of the far greater realism of the modern recording, nor do we recommend possessors of the Heifetz set to discard it. A detailed comparison is well worth making and should prove of absorbing interest.

The Philharmonia Orchestra play very well under Walter Süsskind, the recording is good with one or two momentary lapses and Mdlle. Neveu acquits herself magnificently in what we believe to be her first recording.

Saint-Saens : Piano Concerto No. 2 in G minor. Op. 22.

Moura Lympany and National Symphony Orchestra, c. Warwick Braithwaite.
Decca K 1161-63. 12s.

Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso. Op. 28.

Ida Haendel (violin) and National Symphony Orchestra, c. Cameron.
Decca K 1171. 4s.

The fidelity of Decca's recording process improves steadily. The piano comes through most convincingly in the Concerto, with a strong steady tone, particularly in the bass (which is where piano discs so often fail). The violin record is less successful on account of the wiry, unnatural string tone in the upper register of the instrument: no violin ever sounded as metallic as this, but no doubt in time Decca will solve the problem of capturing the warmth of the violin without sacrificing its brilliance. In both cases we feel that the solo instrument is given rather undue prominence over the orchestra—an old failing in gramophone records which we should like to see finally eradicated. Apart from climaxes in general and *sforzando* chords in particular, the quality of the recording is very impressive—clean, free from audible distortion and productive of a satisfying musical sound. The heavier passages, however, are less satisfactory and contrast unfavourably with the full and clear climaxes in the Boston set of *Till Eulenspiegel*. This problem, too, we feel certain, can be overcome.

Ida Haendel's performance is very fine, while Moura Lympany gives a straightforward reading of the piano Concerto without persuading us that she brought much enthusiasm to her task. In both works the National Symphony Orchestra could have made a livelier approach to their responsibilities.

Wagner : "Tristan and Isolde"—Prelude to Act I ; Isolde's Narration and Curse. 'Prelude to Act III ; Liebestod.

Helen Traubel (soprano) with the New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, c. Artur Rodzinski.

Columbia LX 941-45. 30s.

Mme. Traubel's voice has the full and impressive authority of the true Wagnerian soprano, which makes it the more disappointing to have to catalogue the following serious reservations concerning these her first records to be issued in this country. First of all the recording as such is not good, though by no means the worst we have had from the States: the frequency range covered is narrow and the climaxes are distorted. *Isolde's Narration and Curse*, any good record of which would be very welcome, is ruined by the omission of Brangäne's part altogether. Such infuriating mutilation seems to us sheer cheese-paring wrong-headedness. Was it impossible to engage a second singer, and if so, why? Furtwängler's records of the *Prelude and Liebestod* set an orchestral standard which will not be easily surpassed, while Flagstad's singing of the latter remains the finest to be had for the gramophone. Mme. Traubel could have made a great record of the *Narration*: it is a thousand pities that she hasn't. The orchestral playing under Rodzinski's direction is consistently good.

Schumann : *Dichterliebe*, Op. 48. (Heine.)*

Aksel Schiøtz and Gerald Moore.

His Master's Voice DB 6270-72. 18s.

Any new recording of these songs has to establish itself in comparison with three earlier sets: those of Hüsch and Müller, Panžera and Cortot, and Lotte Lehmann and Bruno Walter. It would be impertinent to praise the finely imaginative interpretation given by Schiøtz and Moore while the quality of the new records gives them an advantage over all their predecessors. We must mention that the surfaces of our "review" set are not uniformly smooth and quiet, though this ceases to be important in comparison with all the many good points. Listen, for example, to *Ich grolle nicht* and see if you have ever heard it better sung.

Hugo Alfven : *Midsummer Watch* and *Elegie*.*

Stockholm Concert Society Orchestra, c. Grevillius.

His Master's Voice C 3482-83. 8s.

Midsummer Watch is the composer's Op. 19 and is otherwise known as "Swedish Rhapsody". The *Elegie* comes from the *Gustav Adolf II Suite*. Although these records have been available in the United States for over four years, their technical quality is high and they will bear comparison with most of the best work being done to-day. The performance is fully in accord with the reputation for tidiness and precision which Grevillius has established in his records with Björling.

The music spikes no guns, or at least nothing larger than a musket; these two pieces are unpretentious miniatures with an attractive colour and texture very much their own. If one can hear Wagner in the *Elegie* and Grieg and Sibelius in the rhapsody (and one can), this evidence of a respectable parentage does not discourage *Midsummer Watch* from choosing its boon companions among lesser but sometimes more sprightly orchestral fry: e.g. *Caprice Italien*, *Capriccio Espagnol*, Enesco's second *Roumanian Rhapsody*, Respighi's *Brazilian Impressions* and Copland's *El Salon Mexico*. If any reader makes the supercilious criticism that "birds of a feather flock together" we shall retort that "fine feathers make fine birds". It is time that Alfven's music found a place in the British concert repertoire.

G. N. S.

Correspondence

To the Editor of THE MUSIC REVIEW.

29, Hamilton Gardens,

London, N.W.8.

BRITISH ORCHESTRAS

SIR,—“Far beyond anything we can do as yet” is Mr. Scott Goddard's summing up of the playing of the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra—and it is no overstatement. By comparison the depths to which British orchestral playing has descended became only too evident, and there is no real sign of any improvement; indeed, perhaps the reverse.

The reasons are not far to seek. They are: too few rehearsals, a wrong spirit and poor discipline among the players, and a lack of conductors with the necessary perfectionist ideals and, perhaps, adequate technique.

To take these points in order: most orchestral concerts in London nowadays have only one three-hour rehearsal. This time allows for little more than a run-through of the programme, and no conductor, not even an unique genius, can do anything in this time. Consequently, no concert as at present put on is any real test of a conductor's powers, either artistic or technical.

The greatest obstacle to improvement, however, is the spirit and discipline of the players themselves. An attitude of corporate superiority (leading to individual conceit) has grown up which makes it difficult, even impossible, for a conductor to put forward suggestions calculated to produce better results, more especially since such suggestions will likely involve a bowing or blowing requiring more care than a player considers should be demanded from him. Should a

conductor of unusual determination adopt an autocratic attitude in the short time at his disposal, he will rapidly be made to understand that he is not dealing with school-children needing to be taught how to play, but with great artists of vast experience who have performed the work so many times that they have no more to learn. It is this attitude in particular that produces the now almost daily exhibition of careless slipshod bowing among strings and poor tone and phrasing in the wind, with intonation not the strongest feature of either department.

But a strong contributory factor, which stems from the sense of superiority (quite unwarranted, as performances show only too plainly) is the tendency to resent any form of discipline, either artistic or personal. If a passage should be played at the point of the bow, for instance, it is literally impossible to obtain such a bowing, for in the first place the players will not be sufficiently interested artistically to make the effort to leave the comfortable middle of the bow; secondly, they will regard the suggestion as an unjustifiable interference implying criticism of their powers; and thirdly, they may not have done it there before, so why should they now. The result is a general compromise to the upper third of the bow, with no more than one or two in the same place, and so the effect desired is not obtained. For the reason mentioned above it is useless for the conductor to persist. Moreover, if he does persist the wind section, becoming impatient, will start to talk and show signs of incipient disorder. No effort is made by sectional leaders to curb this tendency, which, indeed, is obviously condoned, if it is not encouraged.

Until players drop their individual and corporate conceit and are ready to treat a rehearsal as an opportunity for effort towards perfection in their art instead of an irksome and unnecessary duty there can be no hope of improvement. It is useless to fall back on the excuse that conductors do not come up to the high standard the players deserve, because the excuse is invalid. Artistic and personal discipline arises from a proper sense of pride among players themselves, a pride that seeks, through effort, co-operation and attention to detail, to make the orchestra to which they belong an instrument in quality second to none. Such an ethical standard will off-set the crudities of the poor conductor, but what is more important, it will realise the ideals and ambitions for performance of the fine conductor, who under present conditions is more or less wasting his time and energy.

The inadequacy of conductors is a favourite topic among orchestral players and it must be admitted that their complaints are often well grounded, for it is a painful fact that this country has very few men of sufficient calibre to produce, even with the best material, results comparable with those of the great continental and American orchestras. The necessary qualifications are an outstandingly keen perception of the contents of a score, a dissatisfaction with anything short of perfection in the reproduction, and a technical equipment that includes not merely agreeable gesture but a thorough knowledge of instrumental technique. But when our very few so qualified men attempt to work for their ideals they are met with the resentment and obstruction already described, being soon dismissed as self-opinionated, fussy and niggling. This brings us back to the main obstacle to improvement, the attitude of the players themselves.

The condition in which British orchestral music now finds itself is the more to be deplored because among the players are some of undeniable quality who would be an asset to any orchestra. There are enough to form an ensemble of super-excellence; but the potential of such a group, even with the greatest conductors, would never be realized without an individual return to artistic humility, combined with a willingness to work hard towards a common ideal.

It should not be forgotten that the aims of the conductor, be he good, bad, or indifferent, are identical with those of the orchestra. He is as much a part of the musical production as the players, with this difference—as integrator of the various parts of a score, the players are under an obligation to accept his advice. If they will do this unreservedly and in the proper spirit of co-operation they will probably be surprised at the improved results, but if they will not, let them be logical and dispense with a conductor altogether.

Yours faithfully,

PHILIP H. BLAKE.

21, Crosswell Place,

London, S.W.10.

To the Editor of THE MUSIC REVIEW.

TEN CELEBRATED STRING QUARTETS

SIR,—Mr. Egon Wellesz in his review of the two recent editions of the Mozart String Quartets, makes several assertions which I, as one of the two editors concerned, consider erroneous.

First, he writes: "Einstein rightly points out that Mozart corrected the proofs of the first print of the six quartets dedicated to Haydn. The first edition of these can, therefore, be regarded as authentic". Since Einstein in his edition produces no evidence to support this contention, may I ask on what grounds Mr. Wellesz agrees with it? I have examined this first edition with great care and am quite convinced that Mozart did not correct the proofs of it. It is inconceivable that he should have left uncorrected the quantities of flagrant mistakes that any reader with a trained ear can find in it.

Secondly, Mr. Wellesz seems to have overlooked the fact, clearly stated in the Schirmer edition, that owing to the war I was not able to correct the proofs and therefore cannot be held responsible

for the misplaced crescendo markings in the slow movement of K.465 which he quotes. Schirmers, on their own responsibility, drastically altered my text by introducing, contrary to my principles, changes and additions from the Artaria edition. *Nor is it fair to quote from Schirmers' Preface as if it represented my opinions.*

Thirdly, I am at a loss to understand why Mr. Wellesz and Mr. Einstein should assert that the sign "!" means "a very strong accentuation". No practical musician has ever thought of this sign as meaning anything but a slightly longer note than one marked with a dot (.).

Finally, I should like to say that in my opinion the Schirmer edition should not have been published until I had been able to correct the proofs of the parts and until they had put out the scores in the form of facsimiles of the autograph, as I had arranged with them in 1938.

It also seems to me that after THE MUSIC REVIEW had published in May, 1943, the admirable review of the Schirmer edition written by Mr. C. B. Oldman, there was no need to write anything else on this mistaken edition.

Yours faithfully,

ANDRÉ MANGEOT.

[Professor Wellesz writes:—

The Editor of THE MUSIC REVIEW has kindly submitted to me Mr. Mangeot's remarks on my review of Einstein's edition of Mozart's String Quartets. I give my answers to his remarks point by point.

(1) Einstein writes in the Preface, p. vii: "In the case of Op. X, the six Haydn Quartets, it may be taken as certain that Mozart, who in his dedication entrusted them so fondly to the world, also corrected the proofs of them himself." The German of Einstein reads even more positively; he says "Es steht fest, dass Mozart . . . auch selbst korrigiert hat". And Einstein gives on p. viii conclusive proof of his statement by drawing attention to differences in indications of tempo and in dynamic markings between the autograph and the print. Neither Einstein nor I suggest that Mozart corrected all the mistakes.

(2) I am afraid that Mr. Mangeot did not read carefully enough my statement on p. 54 about the divergencies between his MS. and the Schirmer edition. Otherwise he would have found that I stated that "Messrs. Schirmer abandoned Mangeot's plan of bringing out 'une édition très simple, c'est-à-dire une reproduction exacte des manuscrits' and have included retouchings", etc. It is clear to everybody who reads the introductory remarks of Messrs. Schirmer to Mr. Mangeot's edition that they have produced a *mixtum compositum* which can no longer be regarded as conforming with Mr. Mangeot's intentions. C. B. Oldman in his review of the Schirmer edition in Vol. IV of THE MUSIC REVIEW and I in my review (p. 54), have clearly supported Mr. Mangeot's view on that question.

(3) I am at a loss to understand why Mr. Mangeot disagrees with Einstein and myself that the staccato stroke means "a very strong accentuation". Let us see what R. Dunstan writes in *A Cyclopaedic Dictionary of Music*—*staccato*: "dots only:—Notes held about one-half their length"; *staccatissimo*: "pointed dash:—Notes held about one-fourth their length".

Finally: I am very sorry that Mr. Mangeot had to see the Schirmer edition published without his correcting the proofs. But he should not have directed his anger against the reviewer who has done him full justice. To say that it was not fair to quote from Schirmer's Preface as if it represented his opinion shows that he read my review very carelessly. He must also understand that everybody who writes on Einstein's publication of Mozart's String Quartets has the right to compare the new edition with his, even if it is, to everyone's regret, "a mistaken edition".]

This correspondence is now closed. [ED.]

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